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The Prologues and
Epilogues of
William Caxton



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The Prologues and Epilogues of
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the playfyr of god; to whom I
fubmyt al myn entete to write
no thyng that ought to be bla-
mde; ne but that it be to the helpe
the & sauacion of euery persone/

Whenne for as moche I
late had; fynysst; in
enprynt the booke of the noble &
victorious kyng; Arthur fyrst
of the thre moost noble & wor-
thy of crysten kynges; and; also
tofore had reducd; in to englysshe
the noble hystorie & lye of Go-
destoy of wyllyam kyng of Frenche;
Somme persones of noble estate
and; degre haue desyred; me to
reduce thystorie and; lye of the
noble and; crysten prynce Char-
les the thre kyng of fraunce &
emperour of Rome / the second;
of the thre worthy; w; thende; that
thystories; actes; & lyes may
be had; in our matreall tongue
lyke as they be in latyn or in
frenche / For the moost quanty-
te of the people vnderstonde not
latyn ne frenche here in this no-
ble royaume of england / And; for-
to satisfye the desyre & requeste
of my good; syngular lordes; &
speccial maysters and; frendes
I haue enprynted; and; concluded
in my self to reduce this sayd;
booke in to our englysshe / as all
abouge and; playnely ye may
rede; here; and; see in thys booke

here folowynge / beseechynge al them
that shal fynde faute in the same
to correcte and; amende it / And
also to pardone me of the wite &
symple reducyng; / and; though
so be there be no gaye termes; ne
subtyl ne nethe eloquence; yet I
hope that it shal be vnderstonde
& to that entente I haue speccy-
ally reducd; it / after the sym-
ple conyng; that god hath lente
to me / whereof I humbly & wyth
al my herte thanke hym / & also
am bounden to praye for my fa-
der and; mothers soules; that in
my youthe sette me to scole / by
whiche by the suffuraunce of god
I gete my luyng; I hope truly
And; that I may so do & conty-
nue; I beseeche; hym to graunte me
of his grace / and; so to labour
and; occupye my self vertuously
that I may come oute of dette &
deedly synne; that after this lye
I may come to hys blysshe in he-
uyn Amen /

The
Prologues and Epilogues of
William Caxton

BY

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AR
1.1.16

To
My Mother
WHO MADE THIS POSSIBLE

PREFACE

IN 1861 William Blades published his *Life and Typography of William Caxton*: that work will always remain a classic, but in prefacing the Prologues and Epilogues of Caxton with a biographical introduction I have sought to supplement Blades' account of the printer's life. Documents concerning Caxton have come to light from time to time and have been published in academic periodicals; these and a considerable number of others that I have been fortunate enough to discover are collected in the Appendix.

Because we now know so much more about Caxton as a representative merchant abroad I have endeavoured to present him in his proper setting amid the problems of fifteenth-century commercial relations; because he was a diplomat I have tried to show the significance of his relations with the Hansards and with Burgundy. Unlike the early continental printers, he was not a professional scrivener turning to the new method of quicker reproduction: he was an English gentleman, a merchant of responsible position, an emissary for the English king, a lover and critic of fine books and literature who, late in life, was seized by the romance of the new Art and who took upon himself the immense responsibility and labour of introducing that art into England. The matter does not rest even there: the books he chose to print were the best works English literature had produced, and these he supplemented by his own diligent translations from French and German books which had attracted him in the original. Truly this was, in his own words, "a merytory dede."

My aim throughout the actual edition has been to present to the reader a minutely accurate copy of the actual texts as they were issued from Caxton's press, and at the same time to make the reading of the material as simple and as pleasurable as possible to the modern eye: for this latter reason I have avoided the usual mark | signifying the end of the printed line, which at first curiously disjoins the sense of the words, by reproducing the text line for line; thus this sign is

used only in the case of double-columned pages, to denote the foot of the first column. The sign ||, as is customary, denotes the end of a page.

On the same principle of simplification I have expanded the typographical contractions into italicised letters: thus 'mē' is printed 'men'; translacōn, translacion; thēne, thenne; ppetuel, perpetual, etc. On the other hand I prefer to use the common Middle English sign for 'and' rather than the ungainly modern one.

In the case of obvious printer's errors I have restored to the text the form which I conceive Caxton intended to print, in each case however referring the reader to the bottom of the page, where the form as it appears in the text will be found.

The works I have consulted appear in the Bibliography, but I must make special acknowledgment of my indebtedness to Miss C. L. Scofield's volumes, *The Life and Reign of Edward IV*, from which I drew many facts and certain other hints and clues.

In conclusion I desire to thank all those who have aided me in the preparation of this work: more especially are my thanks due to Professor Sir Israel Gollancz for the inspiration to set about this book and for sponsoring it throughout; to Professor A. W. Pollard, late Keeper of the Printed Books at the British Museum, Mr. J. J. O'Reilly of the Public Record Office, and Mr. A. H. Thomas, Keeper of the Records at the Guildhall; to the Dean and Chapter of Westminster Abbey for their courtesy in allowing me to consult the Muniments, and to Mr. L. E. Tanner, the Keeper of the Muniments, for his friendliness and readiness to put his time and knowledge at my service; to Mr. H. R. Plomer, who corresponded with me on interesting points and to whom the discovery of several documents is due; to my good friends Mr. G. S. Humphreys, who discovered the entries in Appendix XXIV, and Dr. Odon Schram, who has always been ready to advise me upon the Dutch and German documents; and last, though perhaps most, to Professor A. W. Reed, without whose constant supervision, advice, ideas and encouragement this book would not have been what it is.

W. J. B. C.

London School of Economics.
June, 1928.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
SURVEY OF DOCUMENTS	xv
BIBLIOGRAPHY	xix
BIOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTION	xxvii
SECTION I.—	
Date of Birth	xxvii
The period in History	xxviii
Autobiography	xxviii
Kent of the period	xxviii
Birthplace?	xxix
The name Caxton	xxix
Parentage	xxx
Canterbury family of Caxtons	xxx
Hadlow and London	xxxi
Richard Caxton	xxxii
Thomas Caxton	xxxiii
Hugh Caxton	xxxiv
William Caxton, father?	xxxv
SECTION II.—	
Robert Large	xxxvi
Contemporary events	xxxvi
Large dies	xxxvii
"Le Marie" of London	xxxviii
William Milreth	xxxviii
Caxton's oath	xxxix
Large's House	xl
Wm. de Caxtone	xli
SECTION III.—	
Bruges	xli
Caxton's early success	xliii
Richard Caxton	xliv
Caxton's long visit to England	xlv
Possible references to Caxton	xlvi
SECTION IV.—	
The Merchant Adventurers	xlvii
Their Charters	xlviii
William Obray, governor	xlix
Date and cause of secession from office	li
Later references to Obray	lii
The duties of the Governorship	liii

	PAGE
SECTION V.—	
Caxton in a shipping dispute at Middelburg	lv
Mercers write to Caxton	lvi
Trading difficulties and embassies	lvii
Caxton at Utrecht	lviii
Negotiations continued	lix
English retaliation	lx
Alliances proposed between England and Burgundy	lxi
Marriage of Charles and Margaret	lxiv
Caxton returns to Bruges	lxv
SECTION VI.—	
The Hansards in England: Edward's unexpected attitude	lxv
Diets with the Hanse and proposals from Denmark	lxvii
Mistaken arrest of the Hansards	lxx
Still no "enlargement"	lxxi
Caxton as ambassador to Burgundy	lxxii
Caxton's letter to the Mayor of London	lxxii
Caxton again ambassador	lxxii
Caxton absent from Bruges	lxxiii
Caxton at Ypres	lxxiii
War with the Hanse	lxxiv
SECTION VII.—	
Edward versus Warwick	lxxiv
Invasion of England	lxxvi
Warwick in power	lxxvi
John Tiptoft	lxxvii
New light on Caxton's relinquishment of the Govern- ship	lxxvii
John Pickering, Caxton's successor	lxxviii
Caxton begins translating	lxxix
Caxton at Ghent	lxxx
Caxton's wife and daughter	lxxxi
SECTION VIII.—	
Edward in the Low Countries	lxxxii
Caxton and Mansion's patrons	lxxxiv
Caxton's visit to Cologne	lxxxiv
Caxton learns printing there	lxxxvii
General Pardon to William Caxton	lxxxviii
First explanation of the Pardon	lxxxviii
Second explanation: rebellion in Kent	lxxxix
SECTION IX.—	
The Hansards	xci
Conference at Utrecht: Edward's capitulation	xciii

Contents

	xi PAGE
Caxton concerned in exchange of ratifications and an embassy	xciv
Caxton, agent of the King, at the Hague and Middelburg	xcv
Caxton at Gouda	xcvi
 SECTION X.—	
The Bruges Press	xcvi
Colard Mansion's part	xcvii
"The Recuyell"	xcviii
"Chess Book"	c
Caxton's intimacy with Westminster	c
Caxton on England's departed glory	c
Caxton in a Chancery suit	ci
Other works printed at Bruges	cii
Caxton decides to return to England	cii
 SECTION XI.—	
Date of Caxton's return	ciii
New Indulgence	civ
Why Westminster?	civ
Richard Caxton and a circle of friends	cv
"Dictes and Sayengis"	cvii
Kinship with Chaucer	cviii
"Jason" and autobiography	cix
"Moral Proverbs"	cix
William Pratt	cx
"Cordiale"	cxi
Payment to Caxton from the King	cxi
Caxton's position at Westminster	cxii
 SECTION XII.—	
Letton	cxii
The "Myrrour"	cxiii
"Reynard"	cxiv
Other works	cxv
Caxton on the value of history	cxvi
Payments made by Caxton at Westminster	cxvi
Various works	cxvii
Caxton's appreciation of Chaucer	cxix
Other works	cxx
Caxton on <i>Arthur</i>	cxx
A modern view of Caxton	cxx
Caxton on chivalry	cxxi
Various works	cxxii
Caxton's possible illness	cxxii
1489	cxxii
Maud Caxton's death	cxxii

	PAGE
Caxton and the King's Receipt	cxxxiii
Caxton's account of his difficulties	cxxxiii
Caxton's death	cxxxiv
A new and completing fact	cxxxv
 ADDITIONAL NOTES.—	
1. Caxton's daughter	cxxxvii
2. Colard Mansion	cxxx
 APPENDIX	 cxxxiii
 ILLUSTRATIONS—	
Seal and Device	<i>facing</i> xlvi

NO.		
I.	THE RECUELL OF THE HISTORIES OF TROYE —LE RECUEIL DES HISTOIRES DE TROYES .	2
II.	THE GAME AND PLAYE OF THE CHESSE.—FIRST EDITION, SECOND EDITION. JEAN DE VIGNAY	10
III.	THE DICTES OR SAYENGES OF THE PHILOSOPHRES —FIRST, SECOND, AND THIRD EDITIONS .	18
IV.	MORAL PROUERBES	32
V.	THE HISTORIE OF JASON	32
VI.	THE CONSOLACION OF PHILOSOPHIE	36
VII.	CORDYALE	38
VIII.	DESCRIPCION OF BRITAYNE	40
IX.	TULLIUS OF OLDE AGE	41
X.	TULLIUS OF FRENDSHIP	44
XI.	THE DECLAMACION OF NOBLESSE	46
XII.	GODEFROY OF BOLOGNE	48
XIII.	THE MIRROUR OF THE WORLD.—L'YIMAGE DU MONDE. FIRST AND SECOND EDITIONS .	50
XIV.	REYNART THE FOXE.—FIRST AND SECOND EDITIONS	60
XV.	POLYCRONICON	64
XVI.	THE BOOK OF FAME	69

Contents

xiii

NO.		PAGE
XVII.	THE GOLDEN LEGENDE.—LEGENDA AUREA .	70
XVIII.	CATON	76
XIX.	THE ORDER OF CHYUALRY.—L'ORDRE DE CHEUALLERIE	80
XX.	LYF OF OUR LADY	85
XXI.	THE BOOK OF THE KNYGHT OF THE TOWRE .	86
XXII.	THE FABLES OF ESOPE	88
XXIII.	CURIAL	89
XXIV.	CANTERBURY TALES	90
XXV.	KYNG ARTHUR	92
XXVI.	CHARLES THE GRETE	95
XXVII.	THE BOOK OF GOOD MANERS	99
XXVIII.	THE ROYAL BOOK	100
XXIX.	THE FAYTTES OF ARMES	103
XXX.	BLANCHARDYN AND EGLANTINE	104
XXXI.	[THE FOUR SONNES OF AYMON]	106
XXXII.	ENEYDOS	107
XXXIII.	THE FIFTEEN OES	111
XXXIV.	EARL RIVERS' PROLOGUE	111

DOCUMENTARY SUMMARY

The following is a chronological survey of documentary evidence concerning Caxton's life; the letters and numbers in the brackets refer to Blades' book published in 1861 (the revised edition of 1882 omitted the appendices), and the numbers in Roman figures to the transcripts which form the Appendix.

- 1437-8. Mercers' Records, Warden's Accounts.—Caxton's apprenticeship. (A. 11.)
1441. Prerogative Court of Canterbury.—Will of Robert Large. (D. 1.)
1449. Archives of Bruges.—Law case concerning Caxton and Craes. (F. 1.)
1453. Mercers' Records, W.A. Fines. (A. 17, 18.)
Close Roll, assignment of property. I.
1462. Mercers' Records, W.A.—Letter to Caxton abroad. (A. 19.)
Hakluyt.—Merchant Adventurers Patent. (H. 1.)
Archives of Middelburg.¹—Caxton representing other merchants. II.
1463. Mercers' Records, Acts of Court.—Letter from Caxton. (B. 2.)
1464. Mercers' Records, W.A.—Letter to Caxton. (A. 21.)
Rymer's 'Foedera.'—Caxton as Ambassador. (M.)
Utrechtsche Jaarboek.—Caxton at Utrecht as Governor. III.
1465. Mercers' Records, A. of C.—Letter to Caxton. (B. 3.), (B. 4.)
1466. Mercers' Records, A. of C.—Letters from and to Caxton. (B. 5.)
Archives of Utrecht.—Permission of residence. IV.

¹ Edited by W. S. Unger.

Documentary Summary

- Utrechtsche Jaarboek.—Terms of the permission. V.
1468. Mercers' Records, A. of C.—Ambassadors chosen. (B. 6.)
1469. Archives of Bruges.—Caxton named as Governor. (G. 1.)
Archives of Bruges.—Caxton at Ypres. VI.
1469. Archives of Middelburg.—Presents of wine to Caxton. VII.
- City of London Journal.—Letter from Caxton concerning the Hanse. VIII.
- Treaty Roll, French.—Caxton appointed ambassador (thrice.) *see infra.*
- Diplomatic Document.—Caxton appointed ambassador. *see infra.*
1470. Archives of Middelburg.—Caxton still Governor. IX.
- { 1471. Archives of Cologne.—Permission of residence to Caxton.
1472. X.
1472. Patent Roll.—General Pardon to Caxton. XI.
1473. Treaty Roll, French.—Caxton appointed ambassador. *see infra.*
1474. Treaty Roll, French.—Commission to Caxton. XII.
Hanserecesse.—Caxton officiating with Hanse. XIII.
1475. Archives of the Hague.—Caxton as King's agent. XIV.
Archives of Gouda.—Dinner to Caxton. XV.
Hanserecesse.—Caxton and the Hansards. XVI, XVII, XVIII.
- Diplomatic Document.—Caxton ambassador to the Hansards. *see supra.*
1476. Treaty Roll, French.—Protection to Caxton. XIX.
Bill of Privy Seal.—Warrant for the same. XX.
Early Chancery Proceedings.—Caxton in a lawsuit. XXI.
1479. Issue Roll of Exchequer.—Payment for service to the King. (J.)
- 1483 et seq. Westminster Abbey Muniments.—Rents from Caxton. XXII., XXIII.
1490. Treasury Receipt Book.—King's Receipt Payments. XXIV.
- 1490–1492. St. Margaret's Records,¹ Churchwarden's A/c.—Burial. (K. 6.)

¹ The St. Margaret's Records also contain references to Caxton as parish auditor between 1476–88.

Other documents in the Appendix :

- XXV. Bruges Archives, O Bray, 1458.
- XXVI. Ordinance of the Mercer's Company.
- XXVII. Chancery Records, Gerard Crop.
- XXVIII. Chancery Records, Elizabeth Crop.
- XXIX. Paper Document, the Crops.
- XXX. Controlment Roll, Gerard Crop.

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Cologne,
Ghent,
Gouda,
The Hague,
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Guildhall Record Office :

Hustings Rolls,
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Public Record Office :

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Chancery Miscellanea,
Pardon Rolls,
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“Year Books: 21 Henry VI to 7 Henry VII.”
- York.—“Chronicles of the White Rose of York.”

“GUILHELMUS CAXTON UIR NON OMNINO STUPIDUS AUT
IGNAVIA TORPENS SED PROPAGANDAE SUAE GENTIS MEM-
ORIAE STUDIOsus ADMODUM, MULTA ALIARUM GENTIUM
MONUMENTA AD ID PERAGENDUM NON PARUO QAESIVIT
LABORE. HABITAVIT INTERIM IN FLANDRIA 30 ANNOS CUM
DOMINA MARGARETA BURGUNDIAE DUCISSA, REGIS ED-
WARDI SORORE. . . .”

JOHN BALE, BISHOP OF OSSORY.

BIOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTION

I

IN 1422, the year (as he tells us) in which the "whether cock" was set upon the steeple of old St. Paul's,¹ William Caxton appears to have been born. Early scholars were wont to put back the date of his birth as much as a decade, on the ground that in 1471 Caxton tells us in the Epilogue to Book II of "The Recuyell" that he feels "age crepeth on me dayly and febleth all the body": but subsequent evidence has disposed of the year 1412.

There is written an entry in the Archives of the Mercers' Company for "lan xvj du Roy Henr. sisme" (1438) which records the apprenticing of John Large and William Caxton to Robert Large, one of the most influential mercers in London, an alderman of long standing and, in 1439, Mayor. The customary age at which a youth was apprenticed in the Fifteenth Century can be ascertained with some accuracy from other records not in themselves bearing upon the life of Caxton himself and particularly from similar entries in the books of the Company embracing this period: from a study of which it is found that the period of apprenticeship most usual was a term of ten years; in no case was the term less than seven years.

Right to the end of the seventeenth century there had always been a distinction made between a man's legal majority and what William Blades termed his "civic" majority. No one could be admitted to the Freedom of City or Company until he had arrived at "the full age of twenty-four." Since therefore we are able to associate the end of a man's apprenticeship with the attainment of an age of twenty-four years, it is evident

¹ Polycronicon, Liber Ult. cap. xv.

that in 1438 William Caxton, at the beginning of such an apprenticeship, was almost certainly between fourteen and seventeen years of age. The date of his birth must then lie between 1421 and 1424, and the close of 1422 is perhaps the least unlikely guess.

In themselves these years were full of import both to the history of England and to the new-born child who was to serve his country in so many different ways during his lifetime. Born himself in 1421, Henry VI succeeded to the throne of England on the death of his father in the following year and John, Duke of Bedford, his uncle, was appointed to be his Protector during his minority: but it was Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, another uncle, who actually held that office, while Bedford, as Regent of France, carried on the third and disastrous stage of the Hundred Years War.

As early as 1423, however, fortune still favoured England and the battle of Crevant secured communication between Burgundy and the English at a time when the alliance of the two countries had been strengthened by the marriage of the Protector-Regent with Anne, sister of Philippe le Bon, the Duke of Burgundy. This alliance was destined to be kept through many fluctuations of policy and amity during almost the whole of Caxton's lifetime, and thus it came about that he "contynued by the space of xxx yere for the most parte in the contres of Braband, Flaundes, Holand and Zeland"—the domains of Philippe. In the same year the successful battle of Verneuil established safe communication with Brittany also.

Where William Caxton was born and of what parents is almost impossible to establish. In the Prologue to the "Recuyell of the Histories of Troye" he tells us that he "was born . . . in Kente in the Weeld," and in the Prologue to "Charles the Great" that his parents were able to send him to school: that is almost the whole extent of his autobiography.

Almost a century before Caxton's birth Kent had begun to change: until that time the large forest areas which constituted the Weald had been of little use as land and had offered no inconsiderable hindrance to internal communication and corporate life in general. But England had long been famous for the wool which it exported to Flanders and this wool, made into cloth by

the Flemings, was distributed over the whole of Europe, and much of it returned to English shores.

Equally famous were becoming the wealth and prosperity which accrued to Flanders through this very cloth-making, and Edward III was the first to attempt a far-sighted experiment. Profiting by the internal dissensions which raged among the trade Guilds and individual townships of the Low Countries, he persuaded some four-score high class Flemish families to settle in Kent and to carry on the manufacture of cloth where the source of wool was ready to hand. Royal patronage favoured the little colony from the first and freedom from taxation among many other privileges enabled it to thrive vigorously and to spread with rapidity. The Flemish became naturalised and year by year they grew wealthier, until in the Fifteenth Century, writes Hasted, "their trade was of great importance, and exercised by persons who possessed most of the landed property in the Weald . . . insomuch that almost all the antient families of these parts (in 1778) now of large estates, are sprung from ancestors who have used this staple manufacture."

Describing Kent some two decades after Caxton was born there, at the time of Cade's rebellion, John Richard Green¹ names it "the great manufacturing district of the day, seething with a busy population, and especially concerned with the French contests through the piracy of the Cinque Ports, where every house showed some spoil from the wars"; so great had its importance become that it was the rising in Kent "which brought about the victory of Northampton"² in the civil war which followed.

We have therefore some idea of the district in which Caxton was born: the exact locality of his birth and his parentage remain a complex problem. Previous biographers without exception have suggested that William Caxton's family was connected either with the important manor of Caustons, near Hadlow, in the Weald of Kent, or with the Caxtons of Canterbury.

The ultimate origin of the name *Caxton* would appear to lie in Cambridgeshire, for therein occurs the place-name *Caxton*, written in Domesday Book as *Caustons*. The derivation of the

¹ "History of the English People," VI. 2.

² *Ibidem*.

name is a little obscure, but the late Professor Skeat¹ connected it with the mysterious proper name *Cah*, which may be inferred from the patronymic *Cahing*, and which might have given in the genitive *Cahes-tūn*, whence Middle English *Cagheston* or (by contraction) *Cagh'ston*. The contracted *ghs* could well have given *æ*.² Dr. Odon Schram³ points out that the assumption that the Norfolk place-name *Cawston* is a mere variant of the Cambridgeshire name is erroneous. Spellings such as *Caluestun* could never have risen from the *h*, *gh* medial sounds and he suggests Old English *cealf* as the basis of the Norfolk name.

The actual difference in the spelling of the proper name are of no account, for William Caxton himself appears as *Catston*, *Caxston*, *Caxtun*, and *Kaxsum*; Thomas Caxton as *Cawston*, *Causton*, *Cauestun*, and John de Cawston as John *Cawystin* or *Caxton*.

There is definite reason to suppose that William Caxton came of good stock, not only because his learning, which he constantly deprecates, is of no mean order for the time and in the circumstances and of which good schooling must needs have been the basis, but also from the mere fact of his being apprenticed in the most exclusive of companies to a mercer of such repute as Robert Large and at the same time as Large's own son. John Wheeler, writing considerably later, but with authority, since he was the Secretary of the Merchant Adventurers, remarks that "The Merchant Adventurers sende their yong men, sonnes, and servauntes or apprentices, *who are for the most part Gentlemen's sonnes*, to the Marte Townes beyonde the seas, there to learne good facions and knowledge in trade."⁴

Of the Canterbury family, William Caxton, a mercer, took up the freedom of that city by redemption⁵ in 1431 and Robert owned considerable property in the parish of St. Alphege, as we learn from a will proved in the Consistory Court of Canterbury and from the records of the early Chancery Proceedings.⁶ It is

¹ In "The Place-names of Cambridgeshire."

² cp. N.E.D. *hox* < OE. *hōh-sinu*.

³ "The Place-names of Norfolk"—about to be published.

⁴ "A Treatise of Commerce," 1601.

⁵ W. M. Cowper, "Freemen of Canterbury."

⁶ E.C.P. Bundle 31. No. 104.

however very unlikely that William, the printer, had any close connection with this particular family.

But the Caxtons of Hadlow seem to have lost possession of the manor of Caustons and to have disintegrated at a period considerably earlier than that of the printer's birth. This fact has generally proved a stumbling-block, although it was always vaguely suggested that the family might quite probably have retained much of its former wealth and position.

In the first half of the fourteenth century there flourished in London a Mercer whose name was William de Causton; he died in 1354, leaving a widow, Christiana de Causton. It is to be noted here that what appears to be the same family of London Mercers a little later drop the *de* and become plain *Causton*, which fact suggests that their place of origin (near Hadlow in the Weald¹) became forgotten.

Now there exist in the Muniments of Westminster Abbey nearly four hundred documents relating to lands and tenements,¹ feoffments and other transactions, concerning this same William. These, although classified and indexed to conform to the complete scheme of cataloguing now nearly completed at the Abbey, were at one time contained in a box labelled "Foreign Estates"—that is, estates such as had never been in the possession of the Abbot or Convent of Westminster.²

Edward J. L. Scott, one-time keeper of the Manuscripts in the British Museum, was the first to discover these relics, and he raised the very pertinent question as to how they came to be incorporated in the Abbey Muniments. The suggestion that he made was that the documents had been handed down in the family, had come into the possession of William Caxton, printer, who spent the last fifteen years of his life in the Abbey precincts and whose documentary possessions, seeing that he died without male issue, might well have come at his death into the hands of the Abbot of Westminster and thus into the muniments.

He also noted that two of the documents were of a later date—of the reign of Richard II—and concluded that they might have been added by the printer to the earlier collection: these refer

¹ Chiefly in Edelmeston [Edmonton], Enfield and Tottenham. From a study of these documents it would appear that W. de C. must have been very rich indeed.

² See *Athenæum*, 1838, June 10.

to William Causton,¹ apparently the son of William de Causton who died in 1354. The names of Henry, John and Nicholas de Causton, all citizens and mercers of London, appear also as contemporaries of the elder William in these documents.

We learn from the Hustings Rolls of the City of London² that this second William Causton died before 1406, for his will had been proved before that year. Scott suggested that William de Causton (1354) was the grandfather of the printer, but this is very unlikely unless we assume unusually late dates of marriage in the lives of the men concerned. It would be more suitable to consider him as the great-grandfather and William Causton (1406) as grandfather of the printer.

Such an ancestry of rich citizens and influential members of the Mercers' Company would explain at once the favourable circumstances of William Caxton's early education and apprenticeship, but there are two difficulties. Caxton tells us that he was "born in Kent in the Weald," not in London, and it appears that William Causton, the postulated grandfather, died without male issue himself, for the Hustings Roll refers to Isabella, cousin and heir to William Causton.³

The possibility that a son of this William Causton (and so father of the printer) fell into his father's displeasure, returned to Kent, and was left out of the will in favour of his father's cousin, is too remote to be of much value. But if there were no connection between the printer and this family of Mercers, how came the documents to be among the Abbey Muniments?

There was, however, at the Abbey one, Richard Caxton, of whom some little must be said in its proper chronological place, who was Treasurer of the Abbey in the years 1501-3, and it is possible that he may be the link between the documents and the abbey. We shall see later that there is some reason to believe that Richard and William Caxton were in an obscure way connected, so that the severance is, after all, not complete.

When the editors of the Dictionary of National Biography came in 1908 to re-issue the volume containing that of William

¹ Apprenticed to Thos. Gedeney, 1341. Mercers' Co.: Wardens' A/c.

² Guildhall Record Office: Roll 134.

³ [134] "Ego Isabella quae femina uxor Thos. Hochons de Causton in comitia Norfolk consanguinea et heres Willielmi Causton ciuis et merceri london . . ."

Caxton, they added to "in Kent in the Weald" the words "at Tenterden." This addition does not appear to be really justified, but it is based on the general supposition that William was the brother of Thomas Caxton of Tenterden, but which there is no documentary evidence to support.

Since, however, Thomas Caxton of Tenterden also appears among the documents in the muniments of the Abbey, there may well have been a connection between the De Caustons and him, or, more likely, between him and Richard Caxton.

He has been described¹ as "a man of business with a sound, shrewd, lawyer mind . . . a man in no wise inferior to his more famous brother (sic), as witness the incessant journeys made by him on the town's behalf (the town is Lydd) to interview the King and the authorities in Dover, Canterbury and London." Finn, in his "Records of Lydd," describes him as "the most important man of business of his time" and tells² how "struggling to free itself from Romney together with the over-rule of the Archbishop and frequent difficulties with the Abbot of Battle, as to boundaries and the rights of the seashore, kept Lydd for many years in a perpetual state of unrest and anxiety. Again and again the salary of Thomas Caxton, secured as Common Clerk, the most astute lawyer of the countryside, was raised, so that the best skill should be given to the Town's affairs." Badly written as this is, it gives briefly the setting in which Thomas Caxton's work lay.

The earliest record previously known was for the date 1438, when Thomas Caxton brought at New Romney a complaint against William atte Mylle in plea of debt; but there is no reason to believe he was then resident at Romney.

In 1416-17, however, he was taxed ten shillings upon his goods and chattels (*pro bonis et catallis*) in the Hundred of Bircholt, then spelt Borcholte, in Kent.³ The sum is large and shows him to have been a man of possessions at that early date. It appears from this, too, that he was not actually at Tenterden, unless he owned lands in two parishes, for Bircholt is in the lathe of Shepway and Tenterden in that of Scray.

¹ *Times Lit. Suppl.*, 1915, p. 405. See correspondence for previous month.

² "Records of Lydd," p. xviii.

³ Subsidy Roll, Kent, 124. 88 (12a) "De Thomas Caxton . . . x'."

CAXTON.

Certainly in 1439 he was settled at Tenterden, for the will¹ of one, Stephen Adam senior, of that place, made on May 28th in the seventeenth year of the reign of Henry VI, contains a reference to a messuage and lands said to be held by feoffment from Thomas Caxton of Tenterden.

In 1453-4 the Lydd Accounts record him as "of the parish and hundred of Tentyrden." From 1468 to 1478 he was Common Clerk of Lydd, and he later became first Treasurer and then Bailiff. In 1471 he became involved in the Bastard of Fauconberg's rebellion, or at least considered it necessary to protect himself from suspected implication and so took out a General Pardon.² It is significant that William Caxton also took out a similar Pardon.³

The Patent Rolls also contain a commission⁴ to William Haute, John Kyryell, Vincent Fynch, Wm. Brent, John Appulton, Thomas Caxton and the sheriff of Kent to inquire into all shipments of wools, hides, tin and other merchandises which ought to repair to the Staple of Calais.

In the same year, 1474, he was made Common Clerk of Romney; two years later he became Clerk of Sandwich, then the most important Cinque Port: he returned to Lydd in 1482, when he was paid for writing the famous "custumal," and there he died in 1495. He had two sons, John and Augustine, both Wardens of the Church where he was buried.

One cannot afford to overlook the fact that on one occasion, undated in the Chamberlain's Account⁵ Book, Thomas Caxton rode to Sandwich with John Fermor to discuss a critical matter with "Lord Revyrs." We shall see later that Earl Rivers was one of William Caxton's best patrons.

There was also another Caxton, a mercer of Sandwich named Hugh, who might claim relationship with William, for in 1451 a writ⁶ was directed to Sandwich "For the gounys of the gentil women of the duches of Burgeyn," and this might well have been through the influence of William Caxton in Burgundy to Hugh at Sandwich. Mr. Riley, the editor of the Historical

¹ W.A.M. See *Athenæum*, 1895, April, p. 474.

² Patent Roll, 11 Edward IV. Pt. 2. mem. 18.

³ See below, p. xc.

⁴ Patent Roll, 14 Edward IV. Pt. 2. mem. 24^d.

⁵ See Finn, p. 192.

⁶ *Mercers' Records*. See Blades (ed. 1882), p. 28.

Manuscripts Commission Publication on the subject, remarks that this is "only a surmise, but certainly not an improbable one."

Hugh Caxton appears to have been living at Eastry in 1450, for he is entered for that place in the Subsidy Roll¹ as paying a tax of sixteen pence. Three years later he appears in Records of both Sandwich² and Sandowne.³

None of this, however, brings us nearer to William Caxton's actual birthplace or parentage, although perhaps Bircholt⁴ in the lathe of Shepway, whence Thomas appears to have originated, has a certain claim to the former honour. In the Subsidy Roll⁵ for 1414-15 there was no Caxton mentioned at Tenterden, so we can but suppose that William's father was not living there at the time.

There is, of course, no reason to suppose that the printer's father was named William also, but a William Caston actually appears in the Subsidies⁶ for a date unknown in the reign of Henry VI, and therefore between the years 1421-1459.

The following is the whole entry for the hundred of Shamele, modern Shamwell: 7—

"Unde in allocacione pro bonis et catallis Baron	
quinquis portuum per breue domini R(egis)	xs.
De Will(ielm)o Caston	ixs.
De allocacione pro bonis et catallis Abbyssae et	
sororum de Deneye per breue domini R(egis)	xxjs."

from which it will be seen that a William Caxton was paying nearly one quarter of the whole subsidy of the hundred. Such an important person might well have been the father of William Caxton, the printer, and of Thomas too for that matter.

In 1427⁸ the Abbess of Deneye was paying twenty-six shillings and eightpence and Caxton is no longer mentioned, so

¹ S.R. Kent, 124. 106 m. 5v. (134).

² Plea Roll, A. 78. mem. 5.

³ Court Roll, mem. 4.

⁴ Bircholt is four miles east of Ashford, within the woody country which still marks the outskirts of the Weald.

⁵ S.R. Kent, 124. 83.

⁶ Ibid. 124. 140(22).

⁷ It must be noted that Shamwell cannot now be described as "in the Weald": it is situated round the upper Medway and is rather north of the Weald.

⁸ S.R. Kent, 124. 139.

we may conclude that the document quoted lies between 1421 and 1426, and that the Caxton mentioned left the district before 1427, that is, five years after William Caxton the printer was born.

II

Of all the Merchants in London, and indeed in the whole of England, the Guild or Mystery of Mercers was at once the richest, most exclusive and the oldest established. Robert Large was a mercer, as his father had been, and in 1427 he received the honour of being elected one of the four chief Wardens (or *Gardeins* as they spelt it) of the Company. In 1430 he became Sheriff of London, and nine years later Mayor and Escheator. Doubtless one of the earliest outstanding events in Caxton's life was the Riding or Mayoral Procession of his master, which was supported by the Mercers with unusually lavish pomp. But the times themselves were stirring enough in London, as the detail of Caxton's addition to the *Policronicon* for these particular years implies.

Three things stand out most clearly from that record, not so much on account of their length of treatment, but because of personal and intimate details. The first is famine: "also this yere was a greate derthe of corne in al Englonde; for a bushel of whete was worth forty pens in many places of Englonde, and yet met might not have ynough; wherfore Steuen Broun, that tyme mayer of London, sent into Pruse and brought to London certayne shippes laden with rye, which easyd and dyd moche good to the peple, for corne was so skarce in Englonde that in some places . . . pour peple made hem brede of fern roots."

The second is an event evidently as grievous to Caxton's heart as it still is to ours, the burning alive of Richard Wyche, an old man of eighty, the Vicar of Deptford and so well beloved of the common people that the double watches which were set throughout the City could hardly repress the general rising that seemed likely to burst out on the night of his death.¹ It was the common charge of heresy and Lollardism upon which this fine old man was martyred. Chroniclers tell us that there was a great moan among the people at his loss: Caxton writes "This yere Syr Rychard Wiche, vycary of Hermettesworth

¹ v. Gregory's Chronicle.

was degraded of his prysthode of Powlys and brente at toure hylle as for an heretyk on Saynt Botulphus day; *how wel at his deth he deyde a good crysten man*, wherefore after his dethe moche peple cam to the place where he hadde be brente and offryd and made a heepe of stones, and sette up a crosse of tree and helde hym for a saynt, till the mayor and shreves, by commaundement of the kyngo and the bisshops, destroyed it and made there a donghill."

The fate too of the beautiful young Duchess of Gloucester would be likely to stir the heart of a youth in any age. Condemned for treasonable connection with the witch of Eye in her sorceries, she was in a single week three times compelled to walk barefoot, clad only in a sheet, and in the presence of the assembled guilds, complete with mayor and sheriffs, over the cruelly cobbled way from various parts of Thames' bank to St. Paul's, there to offer the two-pound candle she had been compelled to carry. Of this the *Policronicon* has not so much to say, but only the facts that "In this yere dame Elyanore Cobham, Duchesse of Gloucetre, was arsetyd for certayne poyntes of treasonne leyd ageyn her, wherupon she was examyned in saynt Steuen's chapel at westmynster before tharchebishop of Canterbury, and ther she was enioyned to open penaunce for to goo thurgh Chepe berynge a taper in her honde, and after to perpetuel prison in the Ile of Man."

Whatever impression these events, together with the Joustings at the Tower and the minor civil disturbances between citizens and courtiers, may have made upon the young Caxton, there were wider influences at work upon the fashioning of his future in the year 1440. A treaty of mutual peace to endure three years was signed between England and Flanders and at the same time internal dissension in the Netherlands greatly lessened with the cessation of war between Holland, Zealand and Hamburg.

Then, on April 24th of the following year, Robert Large died, leaving by a will made only a fortnight earlier, among other generous, thoughtful and pious bequests, the sum of twenty marks to the young apprentice, but making no arrangement for the completion of his indentures. These, however, had to be completed and Caxton must have set about seeking another master.

It is evident from his quick success that he was from the

beginning an earnest, eager and intelligent worker and one likely to attract the attention of the men Robert Large counted as his friends. Perhaps he had met important Flemish merchants who had come to England to confer with his master, or perhaps he fell in with a mercer wanting a reliable apprentice ("lowes," as they were then called) for service abroad. Nameless as Caxton's new master is probably to remain, it is evident that he was taking advantage of the new settlements in the Low Countries and developing foreign trade, and so, during the year 1441 (1441-1471 being the "xxx. yeres" of which he tells us) Caxton's duties took him abroad.

We should like to feel we knew some details of this great new step leading to a life upon which Fortune and Fame were both to smile, and it may not be wholly useless to imagine that the ship in which he set sail to the Continent may have been "Le Marie" of London, of which Robert Large was part owner with one, William Milreth. It would have been a romantic vessel in which to journey, for many a time it had been manned and armed "to resist the King's enemies at sea as wind and time may serve," and on other occasions had engaged upon piratical exploits and illegal sailings.¹

Robert Large and William Milreth were probably fast friends; it is obvious that their duties as fellow-aldermen threw them together to a very large extent, for they are consistently named together in the Plea and Memoranda Rolls of the City of London² and on one occasion were chosen to be joint arbitrators for the friendly settlement of a dispute.³ William Milreth was also a Mercer and of Kentish origin:⁴ he lived in Bread Street and died in 1445, although his will was not proved until 1447.⁵ The will mentions two apprentices and two freemen in his service, but Caxton's name does not appear in it.⁶ William Pykeryng, Milreth's executor, returned to the Continent early in 1448.⁷

Some interest may perhaps be attached to the oath which all

¹ Patent Rolls: 15 Hy. VI. mm. 50, 21. 17 Hy. VI.

² Plea Roll, 9 Hy. VI., 9 Dec. *et seq.*

³ *Ibid.* 11 Hy. VI., 10 October.

⁴ His will shows that many of his landed possessions were in Canterbury.

⁵ Plea Roll., 25 Henry VI.

⁶ P.C.O. 32 Liffenham.

⁷ Chancery Warrants, I. 1248. 6.

apprentices sent overseas were compelled¹ to take and which doubtless was sworn by Caxton before one of the four Wardens of the Mercers' Company. It was as follows:—

“Ye shall swear that ye shall be true unto our liege
“Lord the King and to his heirs Kings. Ye shall also
“well and truly serve your Master accordyng to the Cove-
“nant between you made. Also ye shall not buy or sell
“any manner goods for your own self nor for or to the
“behoof of any other manner person but by consent will and
“agreement of your said Master, not by any ‘cautele’ or
“subtile means shall colour or convey or do to be coloured
“or conveyed any money jewels goods or merchandises of
“or for any such servant in prejudice and hurt of your said
“Master, or of any other person of our said fellowship
“of the Mercery nor that ye shall not accompany you with
“any manner person as in commenyng the secrets of our
“occupation but with such as be under Obeisance of our
“said fellowship. Nor that ye shall take or have any
“Chamber, Cellar, Warehouse, or Packhouse with any
“manner person together for to occupy buy sell sack or
“pack or willingly suffer any person to be with you present
“at buying of any Mercery ware but such as of our said
“Fellowship are free or under the Obeisance of the same.

“ALSO ye shall make and yield unto your said Master
“or to his Deputy or Attorney at all and every time
“lawfully required true Accompt and Reckoning of all such
“goods as that ye for him have received, had or bought and
“for him shall receive buy or have, and of the true costs also
“therefore spent and paid and hereafter to be by you spent
“and paid without any increase by you therof to have or
“any advantage thereby to take as of measure makelardy
“or other wise, against truth conscience and good rule.

“ALSO ye shall not play at Dice Cards Tennis nor at any
“other disports and plays to any prejudice hurt or harm of
“your said Master. And that ye shall also obey and
“observe all your master's lawful commandments as well
“by writing as in saying to you by mouth. And that ye
“shall not permit or become surety or set any seal for any
“manner person but for your said Master only except by

¹ Ordinances of the Mercers Co. No. 4, see Appendix XXVI.

“ his special license and will. And if any person, servant
 “ of our said Fellowship by you now or at any time here-
 “ after known (be) offending in any the premises, that ye
 “ thereof shortly, as soon after as that ye well may either
 “ by mouth or writing do give knowledge unto one of the
 “ Wardens of the Mercery. All which points and every of
 “ them to your power well and truly ye shall observe and
 “ perform : so help you God and all Saints and by this
 “ Book.”

The house of Robert Large was situated at the corner where the Old Jewry runs into Lothbury and around it must have streamed all day long the motley and tumultuous traffic of fifteenth-century London ; gay lords and ladies, apprentices sour, full of spirits, rowdy, or intent upon their business, fat aldermen and pompous merchants : on public holidays a Guild in procession, crowds hurrying to an execution or a tournament, and every day a thousand pedlars and chafferers of a thousand wares.

Large's four sons and two daughters were all under twenty-four years of age when Caxton came among them, and spirits must have run high where they and nine other apprentices dined at a common table and shared a roomy and commodious house. Though London was full of temptations for the lazy as well as the dissolute, doubtless the healthy atmosphere of such a house, combined with the strict discipline that was kept by one who had found it the means to his own success, aided and upheld the studious, pious and hard-working disposition which is revealed in Caxton's career and later work and which was doubtless his from the outset.

Nevertheless here he would first get a grasp upon the things of the world, learn to discuss the wars in France, the disputes between the Houses of York and Lancaster, the religious persecutions, the policy of intercourse with the Netherlands, the prowess of a favourite Earl at the Jousts, a match at archery or a game of football, and last but not least the prices, values, methods of the wool-trade.

The apprentice had strict duties which he owed to his master, and the master in return could not shirk the responsibilities of feeding, clothing and supervising his apprentice at work or in leisure : the trade must be as thoroughly taught by

the one as learnt by the other. If an apprentice could prove neglect before a Court of Appeal his indentures were cancelled : executors of a master deceased must find new places for the apprentices to complete their ten years, if such provisions had not been made in the will.

In the Calendar of the Letter Books of the City of London there is a record of a list of names,¹ to each of which a sum of money is appended, for what purpose is not clear, but apparently assessed upon tenements and land. Among the names appears one, William de Caxtone, concerning which a note says that this is "not improbably the famous printer, whose term of apprenticeship with Robert Large, late alderman and mercer, was drawing to a close." The probability however seems remote, for the date is 1444, when Caxton was almost certainly no longer in England, and it is unlikely that he possessed any tenements (even though their value yielded the assessment of only one penny) in London at that time.

It has however been suggested in the light of this entry that Caxton may not have left England until 1445, but if so we must conclude that the Prologue to the Recuyell was not written when the actual translation was completed in 1471, but with the Epilogue at the time of its going to press, and thus the "thirty yeres" would date back from 1475.

III

Bruges in 1440 was the very centre of European traffic. Its streets alone testify to the polyglot nature of its residents, for they are named after the merchants of England, Scotland, Lubeck, Florence, Gascony, Bordeaux, Denmark, Norway, Portugal, Hamburg and Bilbao, and to it these and many a less important trader brought goods to swell the greatness of its Mart.

The town itself was strangely advanced : its main streets were paved with flag-stones, less wearisome to the feet than cobbles, and even its smaller ones had a paved pathway along the centre ; its underground waterways were the marvel of the world, its great crane a thing for centuries unique. Nowhere else had trade so great facilities : a fleet could anchor at ease

¹ Guildhall Records Office, Letter Book K., fo. 224.

in its harbour and goods be transferred through the famous lock at Damme, where dues were collected, along the canal and under the bridge of the Porte de l'Ecluse into the Grand' Place, there to be unloaded upon the covered wharf of the Waterhalle or transferred by a veritable network of smaller canals to their individual destinations.

Says the "Libelle of English Policie"¹—

"Marchandy

"Is unto Flaundres shipped full craftily,

"Vnto Bruges as to her staple fayre :

"The Haven of Sclose her Haven for her repayre,

"Which is cleped Swyn the shippes giding,

"Where many vessels and fayre are abiding."

To the north of the Grand' Place were the consular houses of the many nations which, attracted by generous privileges and the flourishing prosperity of the town, had definitely established themselves at this centre of so many trades.

On his arrival Caxton would be taken to the Domus Anglorum in the Rue Anglaise and there established near to the Place St. Jean, where the English merchants worshipped, and to the Inghelsche Herberghe, where in time then to come he was destined to fill the position of honour at many a festive gathering. After the narrow streets and gabled houses of London, how strange would seem these wide spaces, broad waterways, forests of masts and pennons, piles of unloaded merchandise and great stone houses roofed with tiles, dotted about in ever increasing numbers among the old wood and clay buildings thatched with straw! And after the jovial sociability of the Mayor's house, how quiet this monastic severity of separate dormitories and a common hall only for meals!

In his leisure time there awaited him a feast of sights to see: the Churches, St. Donatius, St. Sauveur and St. Christophre in particular; the Palais de Franc, where justice was administered; the Ghiselhuus or Guesthouse; the Princenhof, where Philippe le Bon and Charles le Téméraire resided in turn, after it had been reconstructed by the former; the Waterhuus, where the secret of Bruges' waterways was carefully guarded, and the

¹ A poem written in the early part of the fifteenth century.

Hotel Gruthuyse, the palatial home of Louis de Bruges, where Edward IV found refuge in his brief exile and where the famous Library, gathered together by the Seigneur, no doubt attracted Caxton from the first!

But, too, there was a great deal of work to be done; the trading customs to learn, the rules of the Town as well as of the Adventurers, the value of the coinage, the language of the people: that Caxton set about learning it with zest his early success again testifies.

We do not know whether he journeyed straight to Bruges, for the "xxx. yeres" were spent "in the contres of Brabant and Flandres, Holland and Zeland," but it is most likely that he did so because it was the headquarters both of the European woollen trade and, owing to the patronage of Philippe le Bon, who had been brought up at the English Court, of the Guild of the Merchant Adventurers, in which the Mercers' Company took the lion's part.

Some five years after he went abroad Caxton must have taken up the Freedom of the Mercers' Company: this was essential if he desired to remain a Mercer and the failure to do so would have prevented his acting in any administrative capacity, much less in the high office he was destined to hold. Nevertheless there is no record of him as a freeman in the Books of the Company concerned with the period, obviously owing to the fact of his being across the sea.

It is probable that immediately his apprenticeship was finished he set up in business on his own account, and that prosperity was not long in visiting him is revealed by an entry in the *Registre des sentences civiles de Bruges*,¹ which records him as standing surety for the large sum of £110 sterling, equivalent to at least ten times that amount in the currency of to-day. The circumstances were as follows:—

John Granton of the Staple of Calais, for whom John Selle and "Guillaume Catston, marchans d'Engleterre," were standing surety for two amounts of £60 and £50 sterling, had left Bruges without paying these amounts to William Craes, a fellow merchant: wherefore Craes sued the two sureties before the Burgomasters, Sheriffs and Council in the Town Hall of Bruges. Selle and Caxton admitted their liability, but pleaded

¹ Cartulaire de l'ancien Estaple de Bruges, 1450. Tome 1. p. 892.

that since Granton was not only solvent but also very rich and had but temporarily left the country the complainant should wait and call upon him for payment. At the close of a lengthy debate it was decided that the defendants must give security for the amounts, but that "in case at some future the said John Granton should deny the debt of the said sums, or allege payment, that then, on the other hand, the plaintiff should be sentenced to render and repay the two sums, and more."

In the summer of 1450 letters of protection¹ were issued to a Richard Caxton, among others in the following of Gervase Clyfton, treasurer of Calais, and there is just the possibility that he was of the same family as William, for this Richard issued from his apprenticeship under a certain John Harrowe, whose son was one of Large's apprentices at the same time as William Caxton. Both Harrowe and Large were mercers and apparently there existed a friendship between them, so that the young Caxtons may have been of the same family.

Nothing more is known of Caxton's own activities for three years, but in 1453 there appears an entry in the Books of the Company under the heading "Entre en la lyvere," where are written the names of Edmond Redeknappe, Richaert Burgh and William Caxton, who had evidently journeyed from Bruges together to be admitted to the Livery. The sum paid in each case was 6s. 8d., but the whole entry is erased with a pen and beneath is the memorandum "Qz iut. debitores in fine cōpot^a," from which have arisen many unnecessary theories. The general trend of them is that Caxton had already become so esteemed by the Company that the fees were remitted him: apart from the unconstitutional element in this idea, it can scarcely apply to the other two, Redknap and Burgh, as well.

Ordinance 45 of the Mercers' Company reads:—

"ALSO that every person being in our Livery, or of
 "new receiving it, shall have his said livery ready made
 "and to wear it on the Easter Day next ensuing after
 "every such Livery appointed and given, if he be in the
 "Town and in health for to wear it. Also that every
 "man receiving his livery of or from any of the Wardens,

¹ Treaty Roll, 29 Henry VI. m. 3. C. W. I. 1270. 16. Bills of Privy Seal.

“shall pay therefor unto one then within 14 days of the
“said Easter, that is to say given and delivered, on pain
“of 6^s 8^d to be paid over the duty which that every such
“person for his said Livery oweth to pay. And that
“every person of new received into the Livery, inconti-
“nently at receiving therof shall pay therefor, and also
“40^s. which he shall then forthwith pay for his entry
“into the said Livery, over 3^s 4^d of old accustomed due
“to the Beadle.”

From which it would appear that Caxton and his friends duly paid their forty shillings for entry, the cost of their liveries, and the three shillings and fourpence “accustomed due to the Beadle,” but were entered as not having paid within the stipulated fortnight and therefore liable to the fine of six shillings and eightpence. On the discovery that this was an error the entry would naturally be erased.

Caxton remained in England nearly to the end of the year, for when Geoffrey Fielding was elected Mayor (on the day of the Feast of St. Edward, 13th October),¹ he, Burgh, Thomas Bryce, and Wm. Pratt were fined three shillings and fourpence each for not attending his riding to Westminster to be presented and admitted before the Barons of the Exchequer. This ceremony took place on the day after the swearing-in at the Guildhall, that is, on October 29th. It is interesting to find him so early connected with this latter pair, for they remained his friends throughout their lives and took no small interest in his later work as a Printer.²

Moreover a document³ in the Public Record Office lately discovered by Mr. H. R. Plomer shows that in the month of December he was engaged in making an assignment of all his property, real and personal, in England and beyond the seas, to Robert Cosyn,⁴ citizen and mercer of London, and to John Rede of London and their heirs for ever. Mr. Plomer suggests that “the most reasonable explanation of this act on Caxton’s part seems to be that there was still trouble with William

¹ Kingsford: *Prejudice and Promise in the xvth. Century.*

² See Epil. “*Mirror of the World*”; Prol. “*Book of Good Manners.*”

³ The discoverer’s reference is inaccurate and should read—Close Roll 304, mem. 26. Dec. 12, 1453. See Appendix I.

⁴ Robert Cosyn was collector of Customs and Subsidies of the Port of London in 1475. E 402. 4, bundle 30.

Craes, and the assignment, which was purely formal, was to protect his property from seizure." Be that as it may (and three years is a long period for so simple a legal proceeding to linger about), it is evident that Caxton wished more adequately to protect himself from such troubles and vexations as were liable to beset a stranger residing in a foreign country.

In the recorded accounts of the *Librariers de Bruges* for the year 1455 to 1456 stand the entries:—

“It. ontfaen van den Inghelsman ter cause van Morisses bibeles	xij gr.
“Item, noch ontfaen	iiij gr.”
(Item: received from the Englishman, on account of Morris' Bible	12 gr.
Item: again received	4 gr.)

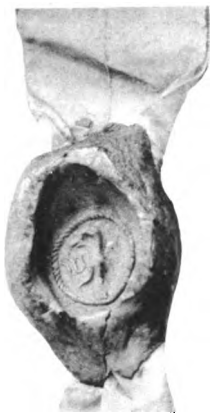
and it was suggested by l'Abbé Carton¹ that, in the light of our knowledge of Caxton as a great reader and lover of books, it is quite likely to him that these refer. There is of course no other evidence and the theory must remain thus slenderly based; but we do know that Caxton not only read but also dealt in books on occasion, for in the Prologue to “Blanchardyn” he tells us how he had “longe to fore” sold to Margaret, Duchess of Somerset, Mother of Henry VII, the very copy from which he translated the work to set it up in print.

For 1460 there appears among the Stowe MSS.² the name of William Caxton, described as “of Calais,” who in company with certain of the authorities of Calais was connected with the assignment and conveyance of the property of one John Botiller. It is not impossible that “William Caxton of Calais” should signify William Caxton, usually described as “of London, mercer,” although there is little other reason to connect him with Calais.

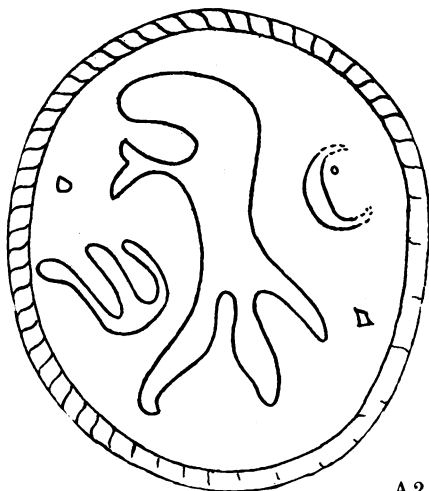
To one of the two charters (no. 130) the seal of William Caxton is appended and (as will be seen from the illustration opposite) the resemblance between it and the printed device subsequently used by Caxton is striking. The seal bears what is known to heraldry as “an eagle's head erased,” and has the

¹ Société d'Emulation de Bruges: *Annales* 2^e Serie. Tome 5.

² Charters 129, 130.



A 1



A 2



B

A 1. Seal of Wm. Caxton of Calais

A 2. Device of Seal enlarged

B. William Caxton's printed device

rounded top, the claw to the left side, the three "feet," and similar initials to that of the printed device.¹ Some have read the central figure of the Caxton Device as the numerals 7 and 4, and they interpret it to mean "S(ancta) C(olonia) (14)74," being Caxton's reference to where and when he learnt printing. This is a little difficult to uphold, and the design may well be a clean-line representation of "an eagle's head erased."

IV

The exact origin of the Company of Merchant Adventurers is involved in some obscurity, but it is obvious that it arose out of a very commonly realised and easily understood necessity. Foreign trade was in the later Middle Ages carried on entirely by means of Trade Guilds. These communities of merchants following a common trade loom large in the history of early European commerce and in most great cities had a centralised place of residence, where, supported by laws and charters granted on the one hand by the Home-government and on the other by that of the district wherein they settled, they carried on a profitable, generally peaceful and law-abiding existence.

In so far as they were communities and supported by the civil powers of two lands they were able to stand against and finally in some measure to overcome the natural hostility and suspicion of the local inhabitants, who tended always to boycott and repress them by all known methods, legal and illegal. The foreign traders found too that laws themselves could be unjust and might be strained to inordinate limits for the injury of individual traders, and so unity became the only real safeguard and combined action alone could secure recognition of their rights.

From the first the Company of Mercers held a superior position among the English Guilds and they appear in the thirteenth century to have inaugurated the Association or Fraternity of St. Thomas-à-Becket: certainly it was not until the sixteenth century that they dissociated themselves from its affairs. Not only did the Mercers outnumber the Fishmongers, Grocers and Drapers from the start, but the meetings of the Adventurers (as later they became generally known)

¹ *op.* figures A² and B.

took place at their headquarters in the Mercers' Hall and their transactions were entered in the same books as those of the Mercery until 1526. The Great Fire, however, destroyed the offices which the Merchant Adventurers held in the Hall and thus was severed the last link between them.

It was Henry IV who in 1404 first gave permission to the English merchants "resident in the partes of Prussia, Denmarke, Norway, Sweden and Germanie"¹ to assemble and "meete together as often and whensoever they please in some convenient and honest place where they shall thinke good" and to "choose among themselves certaine sufficient and fit persons for their governors in those parts at their good liking."

These governors had special power to rule with reasonable authority "all and singular" the English merchants thither repairing. In 1407 an ordinance of a similar character was directed to the merchants "in partibus Holandiae, Selandiae, Brabantiae et Flandriae,"² which was renewed thirty-seven years later by Henry VI. With the accession of Edward IV to the throne the Mercers, who on the whole were stout Yorkists, had little to fear from the new monarch, but in constitutional manner they made haste to consult the City Recorder with regard to their corporation, and by Act of Parliament³ Edward confirmed all grants made to the Wardens by the three previous kings, who are therein described as "Kings of England in fact and not in right."

In 1462 the Merchant Adventurers were granted what Hakluyt names, in quoting it, "A large Charter granted by K. Edward the 4 in the second yere of his reigne, to the marchaunts of Englund resident especially in the Netherland, for their chusing of a master and governor among themselves . . . with expresse mention what authoritie he should have." He does not state his source, but the document may be seen in French in the French Roll for 2 Edward IV, beginning at the eleventh membrane. It is dated April 16th, 1462.

The governor named therein is one, William Obray, and the

¹ Hakluyt, *Prin. Voyages*, Vol. 2 (Hakluyt Soc.).

² Patent Roll, 8 Hy. IV. pt. III. m. 5. *Foedera VIII.*, 464. Blades seems erroneously to have regarded both ordinances (1404 and 1407) as one.

³ Statute, 1 Ed. IV, c. i.

nomination purports to come from the King himself, although in reality this was probably not the case. Doubtless the Merchant Adventurers in London were advised of the new grant about to be bestowed upon them and required to nominate a fit and proper candidate for the King's approval. Their choice fell upon Obray, a well-known figure in Bruges and a Mercer.

William Blades, who had not such ready access to documents as the modern student, seems to have looked upon Obray as the first Governor of the "English Nation" at Bruges and pays a passing meed of sympathy to him for not acting long "in his new capacity; for between June 24, 1462, and June 24, 1463, the Mercers' books record that William Caxton was performing the official duties of governor." "Whether Obray died about this time," he says, "is not known."¹

The earliest record of Obray I have been able to discover would point to his being already established as a merchant at Bruges in 1429, for twice in the eighth year of the reign of Henry VI were safeconducts issued to Wm. Beauboys or Granboys, Robert de Priove, Yvonet Rynzult and Wm. Aubriet, coming to England.² As early as 1456, if not before, he had been elected Governor by the Adventurers at Bruges; for in that year a case was heard in the Town Hall and recorded in the Archives of Bruges, of which the report begins:—

"De et sur la mesuz commis et perpetre par Jacques
"Destroci marchand de Florence contre et ou preiudice
"de certaine sentence nagaires donnee et proferee par
"eschevins de Bruges sur certaines complaints lors
"faites par Guillaume Ouvray, *comme gouverneur et ou*
"*nom de la nation Dengleterre a Bruges*"

The document is dated December 20.³ In the following year we meet Obray engaged upon a diplomatic mission with Henry Sharp to treat with the ambassadors of the Duke of Burgundy at Bruges.

Also in 1457, "Willem Overney, meester van der Ingelscher

¹ Blades: Wm. Caxton (1882), ch. iii.

² Treaty Roll (French) 8 Hy. VI. mm. 9. 20.

³ Cartulaire . . . de Bruges, tome 2. p. 48. This was evidently considered to be of some importance, for a copy of the decision was preserved. See Inventory, p. 24, n. 3.

CAXTON.

natie," appears in the *Kwartiermeestersrekening* of Middelburg as receiving four stoops of Rhenish wine.¹

That Obray was still Governor in 1458 is well substantiated. Firstly there is a passage (which Blades seems strangely to have overlooked) in the very Charter that established him under royal authority in 1462, which reads in Hakluyt:—

"And also we will that the sayd William Obray, over and above that which is sayd, shall take, gather, and receive of our sayd subjects yearely, during our pleasure, all such and like wages and profits, as he had received of our sayd subiects, in the yeare 1458, when hee held and exercised the same office of *gouvernour*, without diminishing or rebating any thing therof, notwithstanding this present augmentation made, increased, and done unto him, of our grace and favour."

And there is a second entry in the Archives of Bruges,² concerning "Quetion et difference . . . meues en laplaine chambre deschevins de Bruges, par . . . Guillaume Ouvray, comme chief gouvernour des marchans du royaume Dangleterre:" but the conclusion of this record is more important still, for here already the Governor is described by a foreign authority as being appointed by the English King.

In this same year a license was granted by the authorities at Coventry for Wm. Overey to ship tin to the Continent, and the comparative uncommonness of the name may to some extent justify the identification of this person with the governor.³

In 1459 he again appears, as "Willem Ambray, meester van den Inghelsche," in the *Kwartiermeestersrekening* for March 12: he received eight stoops of wine.⁴

One of the greatest sources of anxiety to Obray, as to his successor, must have been the uncertain state in which agreements between the home-country and Burgundy existed. Philippe le Bon, from the first moment that the loss of France had made apparent the decline of English power, took excessively protectionary measures to safeguard his own merchants against the English and even prohibited the importation of English

¹ R.G.P. Bronnen tot de Geschiedenis van Middelburg, vol. II. no. 243.

² v. Appendix XXV.

³ Treaty Roll, 37 Hy. VI. m. 9.

⁴ R.G.P. Ibid no. 245.

cloth into Flanders. English clothiers thus lost for a time their chief market and what trade was done had to follow a costly and circuitous route through Holland.

A renewal of intercourse, as we have seen, occurred just before Caxton crossed the water to complete his apprenticeship, and thereafter tact and patience must have been required of the English adventurers, and above all from the Governor, in order that nothing should break the fragile structure of amity.

In October 1460 safeconducts¹ were issued for ambassadors of Burgundy coming to England upon business connected with the treaty of peace between the two countries and further safeconducts were granted in the following January. The meetings and discussions were still continued in 1462, and in September of that year John Wenlock, Thomas Vaughan, William Godeyer and William Obray were commissioned to treat with the Duke's ambassadors concerning the prorogation of the truce and the continuance of mercantile intercourse.

Obray had just previously taken up the office of governor under the provision of Edward's charter which reads :—

“And to the ende that the sayd William Obray may have and take possession, season, and enterance of the sayd office of governour, in our name we have and doe place him, by the delivery of these presents . . . to begin to exercise the sayd office of gouvernour in our name, the first day of May next ensuing after the date of these presents,” that is, 1 May, 1462. One month before that a license had been granted him to ship horses to Burgundy.²

The when and wherefor of Obray's secession from office has been obscure, but an inventory³ of documents then in the possession of the Mercers' Company, made by one, Thomas Nycolls, in the presence of the Deputy of the “worshipfull fellowship of marchauntes adventurers” at the beginning of the year 1547, contains

“Item: a discharge of one William Overey from the Rome of governor, dated the 24th day of June anno 1462.”

¹ Treaty Roll, 39 Hy. VI. mm. 6, 14.

² Ibid. 2 Ed. IV. m. 21.

³ Br. Mus. Sloane MS. 2103, f. 2.

and is immediately followed by

“Item: a certificate made by the towne of Andwarpe declaringe, that William Overey, Governor receyued of the lordes of that towne 58 li. Flemen. to be frendly unto thair towne, and that therefore he omittted certayne articles of privileges etc. dated 2 of June 1462.”

This gives an important clue to the situation. Apparently O Bray had allowed himself to be bribed by the town of Antwerp to act dishonourably in their favour and such a delinquency could not be left unpunished in a Governor. So on June 15th, 1463, Edward IV dismissed O Bray from the office granted him a year previously; but it was Caxton who already during that time had been conducting the affairs of the Governorship,¹ from which it is not unreasonable to surmise that he had been appointed Deputy as the Charter provided.

Certainly O Bray did not then die, as Blades conjectured, but he appears to have returned to England where, the minor blemish being forgotten in the record of his past service, he next comes to notice in connection with the authorities of Southampton, in which port he would seem to have settled. For the O Bray (Ovray, Overey, Overay) family had been prominently connected with the borough of Southampton from the thirteenth century onwards, and by the end of the fourteenth had arrived at a period wherein they were looked upon as gentlemen “of the old school.”² A William Overay was Mayor in 1398 and again in 1406, and a Thomas Ovray was Parliamentary Burgess in 1485, became Sheriff in 1487–8, and was elected Mayor thrice successively for the years 1488–1491.

In the Patent Rolls³ for 1468 there exists a copy of a commission given to Antony Wydeville of Scales, Thos. Langford, William O Bray, Richard Harleston, John Demoyne and the sheriffs of Southampton, Wiltshire, and the town of Southampton, to enquire into the story of one, Baldwin of Bruges in Flanders, that in the previous November a ship of Portugal laden with merchandise of his had been cast ashore at Stokesbay, in the county of Southampton, and that the said goods had been carried away by certain of the King’s subjects

¹ Verachter, Inventaire No. 465. See letter p. lvi.

² Southampton Record Soc. : *Assize of Bread, Black Book. v. Indexes.*

³ 7 Ed. IV. Pt. 2. m. 6d. Coventry, Feb. 18.

to the port of Southampton, contrary to truce between the King and his kinsman, the Duke of Burgundy. They were empowered to make suitable restitution and to arrest and imprison the offenders.

A little later in the same year O Bray was commissioned to join an embassy to the Duke of Burgundy to treat concerning commercial intercourse and monetary matters, of which embassy William Caxton, his successor, was also a member.¹

It is interesting thus to find him still connected with the matters of Bruges: doubtless his practical experience of the actual working rules of the intercourse of merchandise rendered his services of prime importance.

A William Oberay was again Mayor of Southampton in the 1470's, but it is probable that he was a younger relative of the ex-governor, although in 1471 William O Bray is recorded four times in the Issue Rolls for 11 Edward IV as "misso a london" on business with the King's Council.

Of the actual duties which occupied Caxton as Governor we can gather some information. The following passage from Hakluyt's rendering of the 1404 Charter gives a survey of the general administrative affairs entailed by the governorship in any of the trading communities:—

"Furthermore we give and graunt to the said Governors
"which are in such sort to be chosen by the aforesaid
"Marchants, special power & authoritie . . . to minister
"unto them and every of them in their causes and
"quarrels whatsoever, which are sprung up or shall here-
"after fall out among them in the parts aforesaid full and
"speedie justice, and to reforme all manner of questions,
"contentious discords, and debates moved or to be moved
"betweene the English Marchants remayning in those
"parts, and to seeke reformation, to redresse, appease, and
"compound the same: and further to redresse, restore,
"repayre and satisfie all transgressions, damages, mis-
"prisions, violences, and injuries done or to be done by
"the aforesaid against the Marchants of those parts. And
"to require, demaund, and receive the like restitutions,

¹ Treaty Roll (French) 9 Ed. IV. m. 17.; see below, p. lxxii.

“reparations, satisfactions and amends of the Marchants of
 “those parts or of their deputies . . . and to punish with
 “reason according to the quantitie of their fault in that
 “behalf all and singuler the English Marchants which
 “shall withstand, resist or disobey the aforesaid governours
 “so to be chosen or their deputies . . . or any of the
 “aforesaid statutes, ordinances or customes.”

All this is repeated in the Patent of 1462 with definite application to Bruges in substantially the same wording: but there are further and local details. When and wherever he pleased the Governor might summon in the King's name courts of jurisdiction and other assemblies, and on the King's behalf “ordaine, appoint, censure and constraine,” appoint judges, mediators and umpires and receive oaths.

Six sergeants (or less) “to doe the executions and arrests of the said court,” were to be chosen by the Governor, who had the right at any time to dismiss, charge and “set others in their roomes.” With the Governor's consent the merchants might meet and elect twelve “fit persons . . . which we will haue to be named Justicers,” who were “to sitte and assist in court, with the gouernour or his lieutenants, for their aide and assistance” and “well, lawfully and faithfully to counsell and aduise the Gouvernour . . . according as the case shall permit and require.” Again with the consent of the Governor, the “common marchants and mariners” were empowered to “set downe . . . as often as they shall thinke good for their better government and estate, such iuste and reasonable lawes, statutes, ordinances, decrees, constitutions and customes as they shall thinke expedient . . . provided always that they do not seeke any thing preiudicial” to the power of the Governor. Such laws so made were to have full legal recognition.

The technical side of the office is also made apparent, but is scarcely so interesting to us to-day as the broader aspects of community government. The Governor was at liberty to appoint various “ministers, officers and seruitors,” such as ‘correctors’ or brokers, to make and witness bargains; ‘alnagers’ to measure all kinds of merchandise bought or sold by the yard; ‘weighers’ for other goods and ‘folders’ and ‘packers’ to attend to the despatch of materials. Secret trading of any kind was to be put down as illegal: un-

lawful correcting, alnering, weighing or packing was forbidden on pain of total confiscation of goods so treated. Proceeds of confiscation were to be expended thus: the fourth part, to repair and maintain the two chapels founded in honour of St. Thomas of Canterbury, the one at Bruges and the other at Middelburg in Zeland; a second quarter for the King's own use; a third to the Duke of Burgundy or the natural lord of the country wherein they might be found, and the remainder "to him or them which shall discover, detecte or finde out the same fraude."

All goods exported must bear a seal, ordained by the King and given by the Governor or his deputies, and for every piece of merchandise so sealed two pence "of gross money of Flaundres" were to be paid to the sealer, "which shall goe to the profite of the Gouvernour." In addition to such dues and fines, a definite commission, determined by the Privy Council, was given to the Governor, amounting to one penny of English money for goods of all varieties valued more than a Flemish 'liver' which passed under his administration.

It is therefore easy to see that the responsibilities which in the year 1462-3 Caxton took over were no light ones and that he must have won a place in the affections and general esteem of his fellow merchants abroad and of the officers of the Mercers' Company at home.

V

In July 1462 "Willem Caxston" is recorded as having appeared before the High Court of Justice of Middelburg in a dispute about a cargo.¹ Caxton was acting on behalf of a number of his fellow-Englishmen as well as for himself: this again suggests that he may have been a Deputy for the Adventurers at that time. It would seem that Caxton and his friends had chartered a ship from the plaintiff, Pieter Willems zone, a captain of Middelburg, to transport a cargo of goods to London: the vessel however struck a sandbank and the major portion of the freight was lost, while the rest,

¹ R.C.P. Bronnen tot de Geschiedenis van Middelburg, Vol. I. p. 311. See Appendix II.

though damaged, cost the defendants a large sum of money to rescue.

The English therefore declined to pay Pieter the amount they had previously arranged to pay, and on this account he had brought the action. Both sides eagerly pleaded the extent of their losses and the burgomaster and councillors had some difficulty in arriving at a decision. It was finally decreed that Caxton and the English merchants should pay the sum originally fixed upon, less the costs incurred by them in rescuing the goods, transporting them from the plaintiff's vessel to other ships and otherwise unloading them into waggons.

Among the Acts "had and made in dyuerse courtis in the halle of the honourable company of the Mercery" and under the date "Anno xiiij^c lxiiij^c" may be found the following entry:—

"A lettre to be deliuered by the Custoses. Also it is accorded that as for a lettre sent from Willm. Caxton and the felyshipp by yonde the see directed to my lord chaunceler as for the best reynyng of bying of ware at Brudges shal be deliuered by the Custoses Hugh Wyche and John Stockton.

Also it is accorded that what person of the felyshipp be founde gilty in bying of Ware at Brudges shall paye the fyne therof made after discreccion of the Custoses."

Also in the corresponding Foreign Expenses for the second year of the reign of Edward IV the item for "botehyre for to shewe to the lords of the Counsell the *lettre* that came from Caxton and the felaship by yonde the see vjd." appears, from which it is unquestionably to be concluded that Caxton was then administrating the affairs of the Adventurers and seeking the collaboration and advice of the Authorities at home at the very beginning of his office. Close and amicable relations were of pre-eminent importance in the time of difficulty and danger which was in front of him.

The commercial treaty under which trade between Burgundy and England had been for a number of years continuing was due to terminate on November 1st, 1465, and it was urgently necessary to commence negotiations for its renewal. Of this

Edward IV and his Council were not unaware, for on October 19th, 1464, the King wrote to the Chancellor¹ stating that he had received letters from the Mayor and Aldermen of London, declaring "how that it were right behoveful, expedient, and necessary that the intercourse of merchandise between us and our cousin, the Duke of Burgundy, were prorogued for a season"; and the chancellor was directed to draw up a commission² for an embassy to treat with Burgundy. The two men chosen were excellently fitted for their task: the one was Sir Richard Whetehill, already a diplomat of some eminence, and the other, William Caxton who, as chief Englishman at Bruges, was a "most fit person."

They enjoyed some measure of success in their embassy,³ for within a week an agreement was reached whereby the intercourse of merchandise was to continue for the allotted year and for as much longer as should be pleasing to both parties: neither side was to renounce the treaty without giving forty days' notice.⁴

Doubtless the hopes of the English merchants were raised very high on this account, but a serious blow immediately befell them. Several times in the past the manufacturing towns of the Netherlands, feeling that English trade was seriously menacing their prospects, had prevailed upon Philippe le Bon to prohibit the sale of English cloth in his dominions, but each time the results had been so disastrous to the Low Countries themselves that the order had been revoked.

Yet now again the towns of Brabant, Flanders and Holland, smarting under the new restrictions on imports and exports imposed by the English Parliament, once again appealed to the Duke. They alleged that the importation of raw wool from England was destroying their cloth industry and that the price asked for it was growing more and more excessive as the home demand increased: nor was this all, but payment would now be accepted only in gold and silver and for this reason the major portion of the bullion in the Duke's territories was

¹ Warrants under the Signet, file 1379. In the sections next following I am greatly indebted to Miss Scofield's Book on Ed. IV.

² Treaty Roll, 4 Ed. IV. m. 6.

³ Blade's surmise is wrong here.

⁴ Signed Bills 1496, 4055, Nov. 21. Instructions to enter in Patent Rolls as for Oct. 27.

flowing steadily into England. These serious considerations roused the Duke anew and on October 26th, 1464, he once more forbade the importation of English yarn and raw wool into his dominions.¹

Anger dominated the consternation felt by the English Merchants at this new act of protection, made just at a time when amity seemed assured, and the Cloth Merchants withdrew from Bruges in a body and were eagerly received by Utrecht, where the value of their presence was recognised to the full.

So glad were the Utrechters of this opportunity of centring the great Cloth Industry within their walls that they granted the Merchant Adventurers the same privileges as previously they had given to the Hanse Merchants. Thus within a month of Philippe's decree the English were established at a new base and full protection for their persons and goods was formally issued to William Caxton as Governor of the English Nation on November 20th, for the duration of one calendar year.² At the same time an offer of similar protection and safety was made to any foreign merchants wishing to visit Utrecht for the purpose of trading with the English. The news quickly spread among the neighbouring towns and Zutphen had applied for these privileges as early as December 8th of the same year.

Once settled, the English merchants applied to the Town Council for permission to hold a market for woollen and other goods: this request was approved on December 27th, and the first market was held during the six weeks commencing January 6th, 1465. A general proclamation was issued and circulated in the neighbourhood, copies of which are still preserved in the Archives of Cologne and Kempen. During the year a second and third market were held, the latter finishing on July 20th.

On October 12th the Council of Utrecht repeated the protection to Caxton and all the merchants and prolonged the privileges for a further year as from November 24th, 1465.³ There are however no records of markets held during the

¹ Gachard II., p. 176.

² Hansische Geschichtesblätter, 1899. Dr. Stein.

³ Des raads dagelyks boek, fol. 117, v. 125.

next year, probably not because of their lack of success, but that a firmly established and flourishing trade had sprung up.

All during their stay there, Caxton was empowered to fulfill the usual offices of the governorship, in controlling the merchants, in regulating the trade, in settling disputes, save that the Town reserved the right to deal with such cases as involved life and limb.¹ The Governor or his deputies elected the usual officers from their own ranks, but the Town levied a small tax on all goods bought and sold within their walls.

Negotiations for a permanent basis of intercourse still went on during this period and in May 1465 an embassy of six was re-appointed for this purpose. They were Richard, Count of Warwick and Sarum, Lord Hastings, Lord Wenlock, Peter Taster, doctor of laws, and again Sir Richard Whetehill.² Of their success we know nothing, save that a "convention of Lordes" was arranged to take place at St. Omers on the first of October next ensuing.

In the following August was held a Court of Adventurers, in the report of which Caxton is first given his title, and although the subject concerned is of minor importance as compared with the weighty matters on hand, yet this fact renders the entry of value in our eyes. It reads as follows:—

“ffor euell mesure of cloth & lawne. ffor asmuche as Willm. Redeknape Willm. Hende & John Sutton with other complayne as well for lak of mesure in all white clothe as in brede of the same / and in lykewise in lawne nyvell & purple hit is accorded that a letter shal be made to Will. Caxton gouvernour by yonde the see as well for refourmacion of the presidentes as other etc.”

This letter was sent by one Henry Bomsted, on the fourth of September.

The report of another meeting in October of the same year brings us back to pressing matters. It gives a copy of a letter sent to Caxton across the sea before the 27th of the month, telling him that the convention (mentioned above), “appoynted to begyn at Sent omers the first daye of the present moneth of

¹ This held good under the early régime at Bruges also.

² Treaty Roll (French), 5 Ed. IV. m. 15.

October," had not held, but that the King, urgently concerned in the matter, had written to the Mayor of London (of which letter a copy was to be enclosed) asking for someone to be sent "in message for the prorogacion of thentrecours."

The Company however were disinclined to take the responsibility of such a choice and "seing that at all tymes here to fore the kyng by thavise of his lords of his Councill have made the provision in that behalfe," they decided to answer the king by the mouth of the Mayor, "in the most plesaunt wise that he can" requesting that he should as usual "provide for the mater for the weall of all his subietts."

The conclusion of the letter empowers Caxton to "labour for a meane by the which your persones and goods may be in suretie for a resonable time" and is signed by all four of the Wardens.

As the merchants in London had hoped (that 'shortly will come writing from the King to the Duke, or else from the Duke to the King') negotiations went forward, for Edward sent Rougicroix Poursuivant to Philippe, who sent messengers in return,¹ and once again intercourse was extended. On the other hand however a desire for retaliation grew rapidly in English minds and was finally voiced with no small degree of firmness by the House of Commons when it assembled in January 1465. Two years before they had excluded from England many an article which had for years been imported from the Netherlands, but this no longer contented them. They asked the King to exclude all kinds of merchandise, except food, of the "growing, working, or making" of the Duke's subjects until such time as he should be brought to see reason and revoke his own unfriendly decree.

Edward was thus placed in a dilemma: he had no wish to offend a parliament which had proved his chief support in connection with his unconstitutional marriage, nor could he afford to quarrel with Philippe le Bon about his edict against English cloth and yarn, for he realised that his best protection against the king of France was an alliance with Burgundy, and that such protection was vitally necessary because Margaret, queen of Henry VI, was continually appealing to Louis for help, which the latter was always ready to grant if it would make trouble in England.

¹ Treasurer's A/c. Warrants for Issues. 5 Ed. IV. March 1.

Fortunately Philippe himself also felt the need of a strong alliance against Louis and was therefore not disposed to quarrel (as Miss Scofield puts it) over the pins, hats, tennis-balls and feather-beds¹ that no longer found their way into England. As it was Edward effected a compromise by assenting to the statute, provided that it should continue in force only during his will and pleasure, and thus he prepared the way of escape, albeit of surrender, if the alliance had been seriously endangered.

The news of the betrayal of Henry VI on June 15th of the same year (1465) brought joy to the heart of Edward but bitter sorrow to Queen Margaret, who had been some time in exile in St. Mighel. Already her friends had begun to stray from her little court, partly because she could no longer provide for them, partly because they were tired of poverty and inactivity. Edmond Beaufort went to fight for Charles, Count of Charolais, in the War of the League of Public Weal and within a little time the Duke of Exeter and many others had drifted to the Court of Burgundy. At Bruges Exeter was recognised begging bread from door to door and granted a small pension by the Duke and early in 1466 he made his appearance at Utrecht, where protection was granted him from time to time until September 17th.² Nevertheless Edward seems to have had no qualms about this generosity to his bitterest enemies on Philippe's part: it was a trait of his character that when an enemy became powerless to do him harm he gave him no further thought.

In March 1466 an imposing embassy, consisting of the sextet previously named, with the addition of Thomas Montgomery, set out for Burgundy empowered to treat with Philippe concerning a commercial treaty and the possible withdrawal of the Acts of Parliament of 1463 and 1465, and with Charles, his son, with regard to mutual amity and alliance. This last was part of a new plan for drawing the two kingdoms together, and marriages were proposed between Margaret of York, the King's sister, and the Count of Charolais, heir-apparent to the Burgundian dukedom, as well as between Edward's brother George and Charles' daughter Maria.

¹ Customs A/c. *Divers Ports. 1863-1877.*

² St. A. Utrecht, *Buurspraakboek*, f. 57.

These negotiations were carried on at Bruges,¹ where Caxton was for the time once more in attendance, although it is virtually certain that he spent most of his time at the new headquarters of the Merchant Adventurers at Utrecht,² where the presence of the Governor was then as necessary as it had been at the Burgundian capital. Nothing however resulted.

Some time previously the Earl of Warwick³ had written to Caxton calling upon him to enforce the new Act of Parliament as rigorously as he was able, and on May 27th the latter wrote to the Mayor and Wardens of the Mercers' Company in England enclosing a copy of the Earl's letter. Great concern was shown at the Mercers' Hall and a general assembly was immediately convened for June 3rd.⁴ The contents of the Governor's letter were then "oppned . . . to the felishipp," which by general consent exhorted him to "fulfill thentent made by acte of parlement and the special desire of oure forsaid lorde for the publike weall . . . willyng in no kynde the saide acte to be broken nor hurte" upon pain of such punishment as the Governor could legally administer. This information they sent in a letter addressed "a Willm. Caxton Gouvernour de la nacion dengleterre" by the hand of one, Symon Preste, on the fourth of June.

About this time, or just before, Caxton may have been at St. Omers, for the end of the Wardens' letter remarks that they had not received as yet "lettres that ye write ye shuld sent" from that place.

Although, as we have seen, Edward was planning to cement his alliance with Burgundy by important marriages, Warwick had other ends in view. Angered by Edward's refusal to bow to his desires and frustrated by the King's undiplomatic marriage, Warwick had become more and more entangled in the toils which, by flattery and judicious assistance, Louis of France had flung about him in the hope of crushing Edward the King, who was too statesmanlike not to perceive the trend of his schemings, too much an Englishman to be wheedled into dependence.

¹ Inventaire des Archives de la ville de Bruges. tom. 5.

² In briefly mentioning the discovery of these records, Blades shows himself quite misled in his interpretation. See Appendix IV.

³ This was a constitutional way of embarrassing the Burgundians and thus of gaining the friendship of Louis, which he was then seeking.

⁴ Mercer's Records, Acts of Court, fo. cxliij.

Warwick by shrewd bargaining had come to an arrangement with Louis and on May 24th 1466 a brief truce was signed between England and France. But there was more behind it than appeared superficially, for a rough draft of a treaty of peace had been prepared at a meeting of English and French ambassadors which took place at Calais, wherein it was provided that Louis should pay Edward 40,000 gold crowns per annum during the truce and should arrange a marriage for Margaret of York. No less than four possible mates did Warwick propose, and Louis was to arrange the nuptials, defray the expenses, and furnish the dowry! So much was Louis willing to pay for England's subservience.

Although Edward was ready to play up to Warwick as far as the truce was concerned, whether he would go to this further step was a moot point. It was however just possible, for Charles of Burgundy showed positive disinclination to marry Margaret, nor was he encouraging Edward to think that he would consent to a marriage between Clarence and his daughter.

At the last moment however the Count of Charolais awoke to the danger and began to suspect that he knew too little of what had really taken place at the meeting of the English and the French ambassadors at Calais; he therefore wrote a fiery letter to Louis, accusing him of deceit: this Louis answered glibly, but he failed to deceive Charles. In fact this obviously lying letter brought it home to him that a league between England and France was imminent and his own prospects therefore black indeed if he did not make a move in the matter with great celerity. He began to fear that a marriage with Margaret was the only sure method of cementing the bond of Edward's friendship and in consequence once more made advances towards the King, who readily met him halfway. So on the 23rd of October Edward and Charles each signed an agreement to be "*bon et loyal ami*" the one to the other, to defend him against all men and to give no aid to his enemies.¹

On the 20th of the same month a safeconduct was issued to Louis de Bruges, Seigneur de la Gruthuyse and other noble

¹ For Charles' promise, see *Foedera* XI. 580. For Edward's, see Cotton MS. Galba B. 1 fo. 210.

ambassadors, coming to England to make some kind of settlement with regard to Philippe's edict against English cloth and yarn. No one could have been better chosen to lead the embassy than Gruthuyse : some years before, when on an embassy from Philippe to Scotland, he had been able to serve the House of York and had thus earned the friendship of Edward, a friendship which was destined to endure through many vicissitudes to the end of Edward's life.

Nevertheless negotiations with the Burgundian embassy proceeded slowly, chiefly because Philippe refused to repeal his edict outright. Charles sent further instructions to Louis de Bruges by the hand of Olivier de la Marche¹ in January 1467, and an English embassy was newly empowered to re-open negotiations concerning redressal of differences and mutual grievances and to treat for a treaty of mercantile intercourse. A settlement however was impossible during the lifetime of Philippe le Bon and only after his death, on June 15th following, was the way paved for an Anglo-Burgundian treaty.

On July 15th Charles the Bold, having succeeded his father to the Dukedom, renewed his declaration of friendship of the previous October and in September Edward sent deputies to complete the arrangements for the marriage and a treaty ; but conclusions were still hanging fire, so Caxton as Governor and on behalf of his fellow-merchants, once again asked the authorities of Utrecht to extend their permission to reside for another year. This was granted on November 2nd.²

In November a commercial treaty to endure for thirty years was prepared and later ratified by the Princes in January and February of 1468. Thus once again liberty of intercourse and the mutual enjoyment of all rights at any time in the previous fifty years possessed were restored to the merchants of England and the Netherlands.

The marriage of Margaret and Charles was celebrated in the following June and July and no longer was the latter a reluctant party to it : his first glimpse of Edward's sister so

¹ From whose Chronicles one sees the quarrels of the great Houses of England through the eyes of a foreigner, albeit one biased in favour of York.

² St. A. Utrecht, Buurspraakboek. fo. 89. Des raads dagelyks boek, fo. 168. This is the last record of the Merchant Adventurers at Utrecht.

enchanted him that he was in all haste to return to her and claim the kisses she was not loath to bestow.

It would appear that the Merchants did not outstay their last permission of residence at Utrecht, but that they had returned to Bruges a good while before the wedding, and at this ceremony Caxton doubtless met for the first time many of the nobility, such as Lord Scales, the future Earl Rivers, and John Russell, who were to be his friends and supporters in his later enterprise of printing.

VI

The merchants of the Hanseatic League had long enjoyed in London a position as prominent as that they occupied in any of the great trading-centres of the Continent, and Henry VI was only following the traditions of the House of Lancaster when in 1430 he renewed to them all privileges granted in time past by former kings: but the accession of Edward IV changed the fortunes of the Easterlings, as they were popularly known in England.

In the first year of his reign Edward very naturally fell to securing himself abroad as well as at home and he looked with favour upon the Genoese and other Southern merchants who sought his protection, but to the amazement of the Hansards upon them he turned an unsmiling countenance. They were given to understand that all the privileges they had enjoyed in previous reigns and under a rival House were to be regarded as cancelled.

The causes of this policy are not far to seek; first, it served to disclaim any responsibility for grievances or debts incurred by the Lancastrian monarchs; secondly, it showed the powers of Europe that here was a king who intended to be something more than a figurehead and that even the mighty Hanse itself must not rest haughtily upon its laurels, but acknowledge and ask favour of the new ruler; thirdly, it was a move to win the favour of the merchant-citizens of London and consequently their rich and strong support.

Londoners had a special antipathy for the merchants of the Hanse, for, established in the Steelyard, where they kept their goods, and in the *Guildhalla Teutonicorum*, where was carried on their administration, they enjoyed greater privileges than

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any other foreign merchants in the city and not only paid lower customs-duties but also were favoured in many ways even more than the native merchants themselves. This might perhaps have been tolerable if the Hanse had shown some gratitude, but instead the Hanseatic towns deliberately refused to confer similar privileges upon the English traders in their midst. Edward granted to the Hanse a continuance of their privileges in London merely to Candlemas Day then ensuing, 1462.¹ So began the long struggle which was destined to become an ever-increasing encumbrance and bugbear to both the contestants.

The London Hansards wrote immediately to their colleagues at Cologne and Bruges and both the King of Poland and the Emperor Frederick III were moved to intercede with Edward on their behalf: all their requests, gifts and promises obtained only a further extension² until Christmas Day of the same year—and this was in direct opposition to the will of the House of Commons.

In 1453 the Parliament of Reading had granted to Henry VI the right to levy a high poll tax on aliens, and this was nominally still in force. From the first therefore it was feared by the Hanse that Edward would enforce his claims to these and other excessive duties, which had seldom, if ever, been seriously collected before. When, therefore, they sought confirmation of their Charters, which was granted on February 20th, 1462,³ they took especial pains to obtain exemption from the provisions of the Statute of 1453. These concessions were nevertheless due to expire at Christmas.

It was learned early in December that Cologne and the Hanse towns of the Zuyder Zee, who were more friendly to England than those farther North and East, were sending an embassy of two to treat with England, in consequence of which general protection was extended to the London Hansards until the following Easter.⁴ This was the first sign of the internal discord which existed in the League, and which was only aggravated by the unwieldiness of its administrative machinery and the great extent of its sphere of operation.

¹ Hanserecesse II. band 5, pp. 85–88.

² *Ibidem*, pp. 97, 102 *et seq.* Calendar of the Patent Rolls, I. 109.

³ Writs of the Privy Seal, 790, 837.

⁴ Treaty Rolls (French) 2 Ed. IV. m. 6. Hanserecesse II. 5, p. 197.

Early in 1463 these ambassadors, Johann Frunt of Cologne and Heinrich von Apeltaren of Nimwegen, arrived in London, and they were only just in time. On the 8th of March Edward issued a commission for the assessment of the poll-tax and the wrathful Hansards were faced with a demand for every householder to pay the King 40 shillings, and for those who did not possess their own property 20 shillings each.

But the great conciliatory efforts made by the two ambassadors succeeded in smoothing the situation and it does not appear that the tax was extorted: besides which they obtained a new confirmation of their ancient privileges, due to persist for two years and six months (*i.e.* till about September, 1465), provided that within that time a diet should be held, at a date and place to be chosen by the Hansards within a year, and to which all the Hanseatic towns and Christian, King of Denmark, were to send ambassadors to meet the representatives of Edward and to negotiate for a treaty of peace.

In the meantime some hostility had been shown by certain of the Hansards and particularly by those of Lubeck, who dwelt most importunately upon the grievance they had against Warwick, who in 1458 had seized upon their salt fleet. They were clamorous for compensation, but the only reply they earned was a proviso from Edward that any Hansards showing hostility to him or his subjects should be excluded from the benefit of the two and a half year's grant.

In June of the same year Louis' ambassador Cousinet, returning from a mission to Scotland, while staying at Bruges approached the Hansards of that town on behalf of Edward's enemy, the exiled Queen Margaret. He promised that if they would furnish men, money and weapons to Henry VI, the King on his reinstatement would grant them the most generous of privileges. But the Hansards were already laying plans for the diet with England and were very hopeful of a favourable settlement and they refused their aid for so risky an enterprise.¹

By March 1464, thanks to the earnest efforts of Cologne, it had been agreed that the diet should be held in June on St. John's Day. The King of Denmark and the towns of Dantzic and Livonia were unwilling to send their ambassadors further than Hamburg, so that town was fixed upon as a rendezvous.

¹ Hanserecesse II. 5, pp. 248-253.

On the 7th of April, again at the special request of Cologne, which assured Edward that an amicable settlement was certain, the privileges of the Hansards in England were prolonged for another year, dating as from St. John's Day.¹ A fortnight later the ambassadors for the next month's diet were chosen and a commission was given to Richard Caunton, Archdeacon of Salisbury, Dr. Henry Sharp and six merchants of Norfolk to treat with the Kings of Denmark and Poland, the Master of Prussia and the Hanse towns for a perpetual peace or a truce with intercourse of merchandise.²

The embassy set off in good time, but was stopped at Utrecht by messages from the magistrates of Cologne, lamenting that, as a plague was raging fiercely in Hamburg and, in addition to a serious rebellion which had broken out in Sweden, the Master of Prussia was quarrelling with Livonia and Dantzic, the diet would have to be postponed. Cologne however continued to make sincere efforts to arrange a later date, but the affairs of the Hanse were in so great a chaos that nothing came of it and the English had perforce to return home. On the last day of August the magistrates of Cologne wrote to Edward to explain and apologise.³

It was at this point that Denmark entered the quarrel. She had long been growing to resent the commercial monopoly of the Hanse League and had taken up the struggle for a greater independence. To Christian I it now seemed that an opportunity had come: the diet between England and the Hansards had fallen through, so he began to seek for himself a treaty with England. A letter therefore was received by Edward asking for the favour of a safeconduct for the Bishop of Viborg and other ambassadors to come and treat with him. The English King was not loath to bestow such a favour and he wrote to the Chancellor expressing his desire that, since the King of Denmark's letter was a personal one and he hoped that "right good and fruitful matter shall grow by the same," no fee should be charged for the safeconduct.⁴

Howbeit, no use was ever made of the document, probably because Christian learned that the Hanse towns had persuaded

¹ Hanseressce II. 5., pp. 414-6. Treaty Roll, 4 Ed. IV. m. 22.

² Treaty Roll, 4 Ed. IV. m. 3.

³ Hanseressce II. 5., pp. 422-9.

⁴ Warrants under the Signet, 1373. Nov. 21. Foedera XI. 537.

Edward again to consent to a diet before the Bishop was ready to start. That this was true is obvious from the fact that in January (1465) Edward wrote to Hamburg expressing his willingness to grant a two years' safeconduct to merchants of such Hanse towns as would grant the same to his subjects and offering to meet their representatives at Utrecht, or somewhere nearer to England.¹

A small proportion of the Hansards objected to Utrecht as a meeting-place, but Hamburg took the lead in agreeing, and this and other towns promptly sent safeconducts for the duration of two years. The King of Poland, some of whose noble subjects had recently visited England, did the same. But with Lubeck, as one of the centres of opposition, the exchange was made dating only to St. Martin's Day.²

On June 11th, the commission to treat with the Hanse was repeated, this time to Goldwell, Dean of Salisbury and three of the previous year's ambassadors.³ Although the diet was fixed for the 25th, on the 13th of July they had not left England, and they did not arrive at Hamburg until the second day of September.⁴ The ambassadors met seventeen days later, but the difficulty of language was but the first of many hindrances. Altercation, led by Lubeck and Bremen, increased, for they persistently refused to discuss anything but the compensation of their injuries, with which the English were not authorised to deal.

They succeeded in frustrating all attempts to compromise and on the 9th of October the meeting broke up finally. When the others had departed, the representatives of Cologne, Hamburg and Dantzic tried to continue negotiations, but in vain.⁵

The only fruit of the Embassy to Hamburg was an agreement between the English and the Ambassadors of King Christian I, who had been hastily despatched thither, establishing a treaty of alliance which was signed on the 3rd of October.⁶

¹ Hanserecesse II. 5, pp. 459-60.

² Ibid. pp. 461-463.

³ *i.e.* Sharp, Bennycham, Conway.

⁴ Hanserecesse II. 5, pp. 469, 471.

⁵ Hanserecesse II. 5, pp. 481-506.

⁶ Ratified March 1, 1466, and again for some reason in November. Foedera XI. pp. 551, 560.

Edward had no intention of forgiving Lubeck and her followers for the part of disruption they had played, but expressed warm friendliness to Hamburg, which asked a further renewal of privileges, which they obtained for a further five years' duration. But there was one proviso: that within two years the Hanse must send a united embassy to him in England to treat for perpetual peace and league; otherwise the privileges were to cease. They were warned too that the King would not brook the citation of any unjust claims.¹

This demand was made in March 1466 and repeated next year when Hamburg again sought confirmation of its privileges. The Hanseatic League was still reluctant to comply and when Hamburg and Cologne proposed the holding of the diet at the latter place instead of in England, Edward's patience gave way completely. He insisted that an embassy should be sent to England, but conceded the extension of privileges until St. John's Day, 1469. The Hansards in London were more able to judge of Edward's temper than their home authorities, and they wrote a hasty and frightened appeal to Lubeck, stating that unless great care were taken they would be lost. Edward had become however eminently pliable once more, when a further complication arose.

The old agreement between England and Denmark, confirmed in October, 1465, decreed it to be unlawful for any British subject to go to Iceland without the King of Denmark's permission: but in the summer of 1467 certain fishermen of Lynton and Bristol landed and pillaged the Icelandic coast. Naturally King Christian complained to Edward, but he received no redress and as a reprisal seized four English ships in the Sound.

The story came to England however that the seizure had been made by Hanseatic ships trading with Denmark. So on July 29th 1468 the Mayor and Aldermen of London, by command of Edward and the Council, went to the Steelyard and sealed up the warehouse doors and sent all the Hansards to the Counter, and an order was given for the arrest of all the Hanse merchants throughout England. They were told they must prove their innocence by Michaelmas or pay a fine of no less than £20,000!

The imprisonment of the Cologne men was of but short

¹ *Hanserecessu* II. 5, pp. 536-7.

duration, for there existed between that city and Denmark an ancient enmity such as made it unlikely that they were in any way implicated.

In November, despite proof of their innocence obtained from King Christian himself, the Hansards were ordered to pay compensation out of the Hanse goods, those of the Cologne Hansards being excepted.¹ On the following December 5th the Mayor and Sheriffs were ordered to arrest all merchants of the German Hanse, except of Cologne, who were not already in prison and to confiscate their goods.²

The Duke of Burgundy now became concerned in the matter and wrote strongly to Edward, who finally promised to pay part of the fine himself, if the Hansards would pay 4,000 nobles, because he desired to retain the old friendship with the Hanse! This was done and the care of the rest of the goods was consigned to disinterested parties until the end of August. In the meantime the King was to send an embassy to the Court of Burgundy to meet representatives of the Hanseatic League there and to treat for peace. If this diet succeeded, their goods were to be returned to the Hansards, if not, Edward laid claim to them. With this in view, their old privileges were reconfirmed till the end of August, but the whole scheme was an astonishing concession on Edward's part.

While all this was in progress the King and his Council had not forgotten the necessity of effecting a recommencement of the importation of English yarn into the Netherlands, and although Charles left the nuptial feasts and his English guests on the 12th of July, they stayed on to continue the diet, which did not conclude until the 18th. Nevertheless the Duke's hospitality did not yet include the 'enlarging' of English cloth and the only result was an agreement upon two further diets, a preliminary meeting at Antwerp on September 15th, and a later one at Bruges, Calais, or St. Omers, at which the ambassadors should be authorised to settle all controversies.

¹ Signed Bill: 1527. 5657.

² Miss Scofield notes that "although the Cologne men were allowed to take charge of the Steelyard, this year at least they were required to pay the poll-tax on foreign merchants notwithstanding the exemption which the Hansards had obtained. Gerard von Wesce, as a householder, paid 40s. and nine other merchants of Cologne paid 20s. each (Alien Subsidies, 236. 123). It would appear, therefore, that there were only ten Cologne men at the Steelyard at the time."

In preparation for the first thereof, the King commanded the Mercers' company to provide him with certain of their members "to go out in embassy with diverse ambassadors into Flaunders," and on September 9th, they chose Wm. Redeknappe, John Pykering and Wm. Caxton for this purpose.¹ We may assume that Caxton was still on the Continent concerned with the affairs of the Governorship, for, as might be expected, he is not named with the other two in a grant of Passage-money made for this occasion.² The diet was however postponed until January 20th 1469 and again, before that date, till the 12th of May, certainly owing to no fault of Edward's.

On January 28th the Mayor and Aldermen of London received a letter from Caxton on behalf of the Hanse Merchants which was read before a small gathering: since there was not a full court, however, it was agreed that all the aldermen should be summoned to meet at the Church of St. Thomas of Acon the same afternoon to consider the matter.³

On May the first Edward named the Bishop of Rochester, Wenlock, Scott, Hatcliff and seventeen merchants, at whose head were John Prout, Mayor of the Staple of Calais, and William Caxton, as his ambassadors. So anxious was he that nothing further should hinder the meeting that he gave a special commission to Wenlock, Scott, Prout and Caxton, who were already across the sea, to act alone if contrary winds should happen to delay the rest of the embassy,⁴ and yet the diet was put off once more, this time till the first day of June, for it was decided to hold a monetary conference in addition and further preparations were therefore necessary. This necessitated new commissions too,⁵ in one of which (mem. 17) appears the name of William Obray linked with those of Rosse and Rouchede, and so once more the two governors must have met one another in Bruges.⁶

How busy Caxton must have been at this period we could

¹ Mercers' Records, Acts of Court, fo. xii. v.

² *Ibidem*.

³ Journal of City of London, vol. 7, f. 186 v. See Appendix VIII.

⁴ Signed Bills, 1500. 4290. May. Treaty Roll, 9 Ed. IV. m. 13. May 4.

⁵ C.W.I. 326. 2837. Treaty Roll, 9 Ed. IV. m. 12, 17, 18. May 23. Diplomatic Doc. 1073 (7) and 1073 (8). In this last document the name *Ovray* is erased and *Obray* written above.

⁶ Whereas Obray, Rosse and Rouchede have evidently to cross the sea, Caxton's name is linked with merchants already at Bruges.

readily have conceived, even if we had not the following interesting sidelight from the Archives of Bruges. In the *Registre des Sentences Civiles*,¹ under the date of May 12th, 1469, is placed on record how one, Daniel Adriens, plaintiff, and Jeroneme Vento, for and in the name of Jaques Dorie, merchant of Jennes, defendant, agreed to submit their case to the personal arbitration of "Willem Caxton, marchand Dangleterre, maistre et gouverneur des marchans de la nation Dangleterre." But Caxton "s'estoit necessairement retrait de ladite ville de Bruges" and the case therefore came before the "plaine chambre deschevins" for judgment. Blades remarked that we had no indication as to why Caxton should be out of the town, but clearly he must have been already at Antwerp, making arrangements for the forthcoming diet. This was the last mention of Caxton as Governor then discovered.

The ambassadors left London on the 19th of May, empowered to negotiate with the Hanseatic League at Bruges as well as with the Burgundians. Little was accomplished although they stayed long abroad, making Bruges their centre, where on June 11th they received a present of "trois pieces de vin."² In a similar grant made at Ypres on August 13th, Caxton too had his share of the *vins d'honneur*: doubtless as a recognition of his services as ambassador.³ Ten days later the monetary conference arrived at an agreement fixing parity of exchange for all the coins in legal circulation in England and the Netherlands. But 'enlargement' there was none.

The attempt at reaching an understanding with the Hanse also came to nought, or worse than nothing. The Hansards at Bruges, duly authorised to represent all the Hanseatic towns, offered to accept a year's truce if the Duke of Burgundy so willed, but only on condition that the London Hansards were compensated for their losses, or at least given back their goods. On the same condition they were willing to hold a diet with the English in some continental town, but they insisted that Edward must be ready to treat for peace and also to redress ancient and recent grievances.

If these demands remained unfulfilled, they said, they would

¹ Cartulaire de l'ancien Étape, 2. no. 1122.

² Blades does not give his authority.

³ See Appendix VI. Blades made rather a mystery of this point.

follow the Duke of Burgundy in forbidding the importation of English cloth into the Hanse towns and would recall their merchants from London. The Duke, seeing how far things had gone, attempted to mediate, but the state of affairs was irretrievable, for the troubled state of English internal policy enabled the embassy to promise nothing. It was suggested that negotiations should be re-opened when quiet had been restored, but the Hanse continued to name impossible conditions and the outcome was that the merchants of Cologne, expelled from the League for selfish disloyalty, remained in England and enjoyed the ancient privileges of the *Guildhalla Teutonorum*, while all connection between England and the other Hansatic towns was severed.¹ On July 18th, Edward assured these privileges to the Cologners until Easter 1470 and this assurance was repeated from time to time.²

The machinery of the Hanse moved slowly, but by August 1470 they had attained unity and issued a decree forbidding commerce with England and the importation of English cloth and other merchandise. The English merchants however had long before that time ceased to "repair and resort unto the land of Pruce and other places of the Hanse," and all the Hansards, save them of Cologne, had departed from England.³ Open warfare was then the order of the day.

VII

Meanwhile the personal struggle of King Edward against the Earl of Warwick had resolved itself once more into a contest between the houses of York and Lancaster. Warwick had long been incensed at Edward's impolitic marriage and the resultant creation of a new nobility, and his alliance with Burgundy in spite of Warwick's determined opposition had been the final incitement to open enmity.

To counteract the King's marriage with Elizabeth Woodville, Warwick gave his elder daughter, Isabel, to the Duke of

¹ Hanserecesse II. 6, pp. 155-6, 190-9, 212.

² Treaty Roll (French): 9 Ed. IV. m. 18
10 Ed. IV. m. 10
49 Ed. VI. m. 3

{ The wording was exactly based on the former confirmations to the whole League. See *Foedera XI.* 498. (1463.)

³ Hanserecesse II. 6, pp. 339-347.

Clarence, Edward's younger brother, in a marriage expressly forbidden by the King himself. Then at Warwick's instigation a rebellion broke out in Yorkshire under a popular leader, nicknamed "Robin of Reesdale": this however was quickly suppressed by John, Earl of Montagu, Warwick's brother, and the leader was slain.

Nevertheless the cause was taken up by Sir William Conyers, who marched to Edgecote with some sixty thousand men and defeated the royal forces. By Clarence's command Earl Rivers, Sir John Woodville, the Queen's father and brother, and the Earl of Pembroke were all beheaded.

On the defeat of his forces the King was for a time compelled to submit to Warwick and was kept a virtual prisoner by the Nevilles. But reconciliation was brought about and the prospect of winning Edward to the proposed alliance with Louis of France served to free the King once more.

Later in the year 1469 another insurrection of the commonalty broke out in Lincolnshire under Sir Robert Welles. Many see in this too the instigation of Warwick. Be that as it may, Edward marched into Rutland and inflicted a crushing defeat upon the rebels. Welles was captured and confessed that the real object of the rising had been to put Clarence on the throne, whereupon Edward immediately proclaimed Warwick and Clarence traitors: both however succeeded in escaping to France, where they were well received by Louis.

This finally proved to Warwick that there was no chance of regaining his lost power except by the aid of the House of Lancaster, so he approached Louis with the request that he should persuade Queen Margaret, who was still in France, to receive overtures of friendship.

The enmity which had been so bitter between them in the past took long to break down, but at last an alliance was agreed upon and a treaty drawn up and signed at Amboise between Warwick, Margaret and Clarence, by which it was decided that the crown should be settled on the young Prince of Wales, who was to marry Anne Neville, Warwick's second daughter, and that, failing the prince, the crown should pass to Clarence.

Active preparations were made to invade England and dethrone Edward, but Clarence, feeling himself entirely put in the

background by the new treaty, at once opened negotiations with his brother in order to reinstate himself in his favour. Edward paid no heed to the warnings of Charles the Bold, and Warwick and Clarence were allowed to land unmolested at Dartmouth: there they raised the standard of the imprisoned Henry VI. As they marched towards London the whole county joined their ranks, and Edward, finding that even the trusty Montagu had deserted him, fled from England. Henry was once more dragged from the Tower and crowned King.

Georges Chastellain pictures the months in which Warwick was again supreme in England as a sort of reign of terror, but it appears that his relations with Edward IV did not leave him unbiassed. The documentary records of the period give far other evidence. Pardons were issued to almost everyone that sought them: from the justicers and barons of the Exchequer to the Sheriffs of England, appointments remained unchanged, and very few indeed were the offices Warwick found with which to reward his friends.

He himself took again the Captaincy of Calais and the Great Chamberlainship, both of which offices he had held under Edward, and, as Worcester had fled the country (with a large sum of money), he was justified in giving the Treasurership to the Prior of St. John's.¹ The desirable office of Master of the King's Mints in England and Calais had been held from the beginning of Edward's reign by Lord Hastings: this was now given to Sir Richard Tunstall, and Sir John Plummer became Keeper of the Great Wardrobe.

Warwick's return to power was marked also by an unusual clemency: many prominent men had of course suffered arrest, but they were soon again set at liberty. Upon one alone did vengeance fall and then with the consent and to the joy of most moderate Englishmen.

The Earl of Worcester, the "butcher of England," was given to the headsman amidst scenes of vehement popular hatred and died as a haughty but pious gentleman. On the one hand his inexorability had allowed him to perform deeds of the utmost ruthlessness and cruelty, while on the other his learning, eloquence and gentility had gained for him the friendship of the Pope and the admiration of all the writers of his day.

¹ Cal. of Patent Rolls, II. 229, 232.

A writer himself, he encouraged others to write, and Caxton says of him that he

“flowred in vertue and connyng, to whom I knewe none
 “lyke among the lordes of the temporalite in science and
 “moral vertue”¹

and laments his loss, recommending all his readers to pray for the soul of one who with great labour had made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and who so bravely faced his death that

“every man that was there might lerne to die” from his example. “Wherin,” says Caxton, “I hope and doubt
 “not that God receyued his soule in to his euirlastyng
 ‘blysse, for as I am enfourmed he ryght advydedly
 “ordeyned alle his thynges as well for his last will of
 “worldly goodes as for his sowle helthe, paciently and
 “holyly without grudchyng in charyte to fore that he
 “departed out of this world, which is gladsom and joyous
 “to here.”²

But despite Caxton's generous praise it is to be feared that few indeed lamented the death of John Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester.

The exact extent to which these political changes reacted upon the Netherlands and therefore upon Caxton is impossible to determine. It had been generally accepted that he relinquished the office of Governor of the English Nation some time in the year 1469: further information on the point has however come to hand from the Archives of Middelburg, which record in the *Kwartiermeestersrekening* the sending of messengers to “Willem Caxstoen, meester van der Inghelscher nacie,” twice in the year 1469 and also the present of 3 quarts of wine, Rhenish and Gascon, made to Caxton, still “meester van der Inghelshe nacie,” some time during the year 1470.

These entries³ considerably reduce the margin of uncertainty as to the date, for we have his own authority for the fact that he was definitely in the service of Margaret, Duchess of Burgundy, sister of Edward IV, by about March 1471.⁴

¹ “De Amicitia,” Prologue.

² “Orations,” Epilogue.

³ R. C. P. Bronnen tot de Geschiedenis van Middelburg, II. pp. 353-5. See Appendix VII. and IX.

⁴ “Recuyell,” Prologue.

In the light of the fact however that Warwick's policy was to reappoint in office the men who had already held them under Edward, it seems unlikely that Caxton was dismissed from the Governorship,—unless perchance he suffered because of his friendly connection with Lord Hastings, who was supplanted at Calais.

The earliest record of a successor in the office appears in the French Roll for the twelfth year of the reign of Edward the Fourth (1472), where Hatclyf, Russell and John Pickering, *Consulis Mercatorum Regni nostri frequentantium Patrias ipsius Fratris nostri*, are empowered to treat with Burgundy.¹ The 1547 Inventory of the Mercers' Documents (see above, p. li) under Item Thirty-seven records "the privelege graunted unto the said fellisship by the towne of Andwarpe, maister Pykeringe being Governour, dated in the yere of our lorde god from his incarnacion 1474."

The *Kwartiermeestersrekening*² also records negotiations with the Master (unnamed) of the English Nation on various matters in 1473, and presents of wine given to "meester Pickelin" in 1474 and to "meester Pickeri" in 1475. In 1474 a great feast was made for the merchants of the English Nation in the Townhall of Middelburg and an alteration of the trading rules resulted. The whole series of entries goes to show that there existed a close connection between the English at Bruges and at Middelburg which had previously been unsuspected.

For a date some thirty years earlier the same Inventory includes "dyuers wrytinges concerning the appointment made bitweene the lorde and towne of Barrowe on the one partie and John Pykering, governor and the marchauntes of Englande on the other partie, dated 8 day of Marche 1445, with a copie of the trewce of Hollande, Zealand and Friseland. . . ."

This cannot refer to Caxton's successor, who was not admitted to the Mercers' Company until 1466 and was therefore probably not more than three years old in 1445, but the John Pykering in question might well have been the former's father, and if that were the case perhaps it gives some cause

¹ Mem. 13.

² R.C.P. Middelburg, II. pp. 359-61.

for the pride which led to the following curious incident enshrined in the Palmer's Annals for 1483.¹

In that year John Pykering, having been at least eleven years Governor, was called before an assembly of the Mercers for having spoken against the Wardens "alle hawty and roiall." "Full of pride" (I quote from the *History of the Hospital of St. Thomas of Acon*)² "he disdained to stand bare headed, but boldly did his cap on, alleging simple excuses and rather glorying in the deed. Upon which it was agreed by an assembly of Adventurers of different fellowships, as advised by the assembly of Mercers, that he should be discharged from his office of governor, wherupon he submitted to the sentence of a general Court of the Mercery, which was that he should ask pardon on his knees. He was sore moved by this sentence, but was unable to obtain its relaxation, and kneeling down on his knees, in the presence of the Court, which consisted of four Wardens, five aldermen, forty of the livery and thirty out of the livery, he repeated these words :—

"For as much as that I have offended you, my masters, the wardens, or any of you, in word or deed, or writing, to your displeasure, and against right, I am sorry thereof, and acknowledge my offence and pray your forgiveness."

Blades shrewdly comments that although the Governor was nominated by the King, this incident shows in whose hands the executive power really lay.

From the year 1478 to the end of Edward's reign,³ there appear payments made to the Governor of the English nation for pieces of Arras and similar luxuries and artistic works of great cost purchased for the King. Perhaps Edward was too much occupied with other matters to employ Caxton in this manner during the period of his office. Certainly there are no similar entries for the earlier part of Edward's reign.

In March 1469 Caxton had begun to translate the "Recueil des histoires de Troies," compiled from Latin sources by Raoul Le Fèvre, "preest and chapelayne unto the right noble, glorious and mighty prynce in hys tyme Phelip duc of

¹ Mercers' Records.

² By Sir John Watney, who himself paraphrases the original documents.

³ Cf. E 404. 77.

Bourgoyne."¹ Reading it in the French. Caxton tells us that he took such pleasure in the "many strange and meruayllous histories" as well as "for the fayr langage of frenshe which was in prose so well and compendiously sette and wretton" that, since he had never seen a copy "in oure englisch tonge," he thought it would be "a good besynes to translate hyt in to oure englisch." When however he had completed five or six quires, he bethought himself of his inadequacy for the task and lay it aside, until "on a tyme hit fortunod" that he showed them to Margaret, the new Duchess of Burgundy, who commanded him to amend his English and continue the work.

What time he was able to give to his new literary enterprise must have been very brief (for the "yddeness" which he seeks to eschew is obviously a literary fiction when professed by the Governor of the English Nation and an ambassador for the King in such strenuous times), but, begun in Bruges, it was continued at Ghent and not finished until September 1471 in the holy city of Cologne.

Why Caxton visited Ghent is not certainly known, but as the ambassadors of Edward IV there invested Charles the Bold with the Order of the Garter and as on that occasion John Russell delivered the oration which Caxton later printed at Westminster,² it would seem likely that he was present in person for that event in February 1470.

The exact date at which he relinquished the governorship must remain a mystery, and his reason for doing so is equally obscure. Some have urged that it was because encroaching infirmity unfitted him for his duties and that he was therefore very glad to accept Margaret's offer to become her adviser in commercial affairs, since, in common with a great number of the nobility of the day, she found it profitable to dabble in trading. Her brother later gave her a special license to trade with England. But the theory of infirmity is not so valid now that we know that Caxton was not born in 1412, and, besides, it was after this change of occupation that he embarked upon the daring enterprise which involved what was probably the hardest work of his whole lifetime.

¹ "Recuyell," Prologue.

² "Propositio Johannis Russell," c. 1476-7. This is the only work of contemporary political interest which came from Caxton's press.

A. N. Butt¹ appears to have been the first student of Caxton to advance the theory that Caxton was no longer willing to sustain the celibacy imposed by the rules of the Company upon merchants abroad, and that he married about this time. This theory was based on the evidence afforded by a loose sheet of paper found by the late Mr. Gairdner at the Public Record Office which concerns one, Elizabeth, daughter of William Caxton, "bokeprynter." Now, since Caxton is known to have a daughter² who in 1496 was married, one may suppose her to have been born between 1471-1475, and it is on this account very probable that Caxton actually did marry about 1470. Perhaps the lady was in the retinue of Margaret of York herself.

It is however not at all certain that strict celibacy was imposed upon the Merchants abroad. Although no woman was allowed to enter the quarters of the trading community, there is no evidence to show that a merchant was not permitted to have his wife living in the same town, and, of course, he might very well marry in England and see his wife only intermittently on the occasions when his trading brought him back to these shores. Mr. Plomer, in a letter, points out that although the Settlement document³ of 1453 is not technically a marriage settlement, it is possible that Caxton may have married at that time and left his wife in England. He would have been about thirty at the time.

In the Churchwardens' Accounts of the Church of St. Margaret at Westminster under the date 1490-1491 appears the entry:—

"Item atte Bureying of Mawde Caxston for torches and
tapers iijs. iid."

This may well refer to the wife of William Caxton, who settled at Westminster when he came back to England. Nothing however can be proved. A thorough search of the Wardrobe and kindred accounts of the period has not revealed a lady whose Christian name was Maud in any contact with

¹ In "William Caxton, Mercer, Courtier, Author, Printer."

² See { Additional Note 1.
Appendices XXVII-XXX.

³ See Appendix I.

Margaret, but such is rather more to be expected than otherwise and does not in any way mitigate the probability of the case.

VIII

When Edward IV fled from England he embarked in the *Wash* and there narrowly escaped a disaster such as had once before fallen upon a king of England, but Fortune's wheel was not destined then to come full circle and he made good his escape with a following variously estimated as between one and five hundred.

It was then that the Hansards came very near to taking a crushing vengeance: the great merchant-ships of the League had been equipped for war and were ever ready to bear down upon any English vessel which crossed their bows, and it so happened that Edward's almost defenceless little convoy fell in with a force of Hanseatic vessels which gave chase.

The English managed to run in close to the Dutch coast as the ebb-tide was beginning, but the Hansards anchored a little further out to wait for the returning tide and an easy capture. Doubtless had they known that so valuable a prize as Edward, King of England, was on board they would have made greater efforts to have come to grips at once. By good fortune it chanced that Louis de Bruges, Seigneur de la Gruthuyse, was then at Alckmaer and when he learned whom the English vessels bore, he went with all speed to greet the king who was already his great friend: he stood too in high favour with the Hansards and they reluctantly obeyed him when he commanded them to forgo their prize.

It was on October 9th 1470 that Edward landed at Alckmaer, and two days later he journeyed to the Hague, where he enjoyed the freely-given hospitality of the Seigneur,¹ until the end of December, but it was not till January 13th of the following year that he went to Bruges.

In the mean time Charles of Burgundy was determining within himself a fit course of action. For years he had been

¹ This beneficence did not go unrewarded. In June 1471 Edward and Parliament sent Louis de Bruges a special message of thanks and in September he was invited to England, received the public thanks of the Speaker of the House and was created Count of Winchester as a mark of the king's affection and esteem.

harbouring Lancastrian exiles at his court and he felt little grief that a Lancastrian king should have regained the throne of England, for Edward, although his brother-in-law, was perhaps too high-handed a monarch to gain any real meed of his friendship. How much chance Edward had of regaining his kingdom had to be determined and so he contented himself with granting him a pension of 500 marks, while he watched what effects his congratulations of success had upon Henry, or rather upon Warwick.

In England Warwick was finding how difficult it was to persuade the merchants to favour a war with Burgundy, but Charles himself was unaware of this and, as the weeks passed, he saw more and more clearly, as he thought, that an alliance between England and France in a war against him was becoming imminent. It was then that he invited Edward to Bruges and began to look about him for means of restoring him to the throne.

Ironical as it seems, it was at last the Hansards who lent Edward ships and money to return to his kingdom. On February 19th he set sail again from Burgundy and in April the battle of Barnet put a final stop to the Lancastrian schemings in a crushing defeat which left none of his outstanding enemies alive. Only the young Henry Tudor remained as a hope of the Lancastrian party and it must have been only the most fanatical of them who dreamed of facing the triumphant Edward in a future conflict.

Without doubt it was during this short period of his exiled inactivity that Edward really gained his respect for books, for the Library at the Hotel Gruthuyse was one of the finest of its day and such as to stimulate the desire of any man not wholly insensible to the appeal of literature. Caxton must already have been known to the King by name, if not in person, as an able and upright man and a faithful servant, but it was probably during these months that he, now in the service of the King's sister, was made known to Edward in another light, for it is certain that when Caxton returned to England the King was not a niggard of his favour, as book after book made "under the shadow" of his protection testifies.

It is not insignificant that at this time too Colard Mansion came under the special protection of Gruthuyse, who honoured

him so far as to become godfather to his little son. In his early youth Mansion had been given a position in the Library of the Duke of Burgundy and had rapidly made himself known as a careful and artistic scribe and illuminator of manuscripts. Just at this time (1471) he attained the distinction of being elected Dean of the *Confrerie des libraires de Bruges* and then, if not before, would naturally have attracted the notice of William Caxton. It was from the collaboration of these two under the patronage of a noble triad, Margaret, Duchess of Burgundy, Louis de Bruges and now Edward, King of England, that the beginnings of English printing flourished.

But although the seed was planted in those fertile months, it was not till later that the first blade made its appearance ; in the mean time fate ordained that William Caxton's business took him to Cologne—the 'holy city,' whose position on the Rhine made it one of the first places to receive from Mentz the new art of printing and which was at that time the nearest city to Bruges that possessed a printing-press:

One would have liked to think that Caxton's visit to Cologne was made at the instigation of Margaret in order that he might there learn the new art, but such is almost certainly not the case. The Duchess of Burgundy had seen only the first few quires of Caxton's translation at the time and though they showed great promise, she could not possibly have suspected to what a great and important mass of literary work they were the heralds.

It was not until the close of 1471¹ that he returned to Bruges to present the finished manuscript-translation to his noble mistress and only then, when her approval had been earned, that it came to him to put the work into print as he had seen done at Cologne, the more easily to supply the "many lords" who desired copies of the book.

Nevertheless it is not possible to determine the exact business which took Caxton to Cologne, but, since he was no longer governor, he was perhaps more free (we do not know how exacting his duties to the Duchess were or how far the "yerely fee" was a mark of personal protection and patronage generously bestowed in the interests of letters) to undertake such diplomatic missions as those in which he already had some experience.

¹ Duff, *Wm. Caxton*, p. 25.

Edward had mollified the Hanse towns by promises of "great privileges" when his kingdom should be recovered and in return they lent him certain of the ships of Dantzic to be his escort and to attend him for fifteen days in case of emergencies and a forced retreat.¹

This fact in itself raised a delicate situation with regard to the merchants of Cologne, for they had seen fit to remain loyal to England at the cost of expulsion from the Hanseatic League and were then enjoying large privileges in England, including the possession of the League headquarters at the *Guildhalla Teutonicorum* and the Steelyard.

A restoration of privileges to the whole League must necessarily deprive them of these great benefits. It may well have been Caxton's mission to convey to the Cologners that Edward's new gesture to the League should in no way be allowed to interfere with their own privileges. Such a matter would have to be treated with the utmost secrecy and it is possible that Edward gave Caxton private and personal instructions on the matter before he left Bruges in February.

There is however the strong possibility that Caxton's departure to Cologne may have had something of the motive of a voluntary and protective exile, for it was just at this time that the news must have reached Bruges of the insubordination of almost the whole of Caxton's native county of Kent.

Two points rather sustain this view: the first is, as we shall see presently, that Caxton took out a General Pardon in the following year before returning to Bruges, and the second, that the conventional apology for producing a literary work, the avoidance of idleness, takes on in the Epilogue to the *Recuyell*, Book II, a note of genuine sincerity:

"And also because that I haue now good leyzer beyng
"in Coleyn And haue noue other thyng to doo at this
"tyme In eschewyng of yllenes, moder of all vyces."

By July 1471 Caxton was actually in Cologne, for the Register of Aliens of Cologne² has an entry dated the 17th of that

¹ *Chronique de Xⁿ von Geren* (Miss Scofield's reference), *Hanserecense* II. 6, pp. 404-5.

² Register C6. These entries were published as the discovery of Colonel Birch, but had previously been printed in an obscure footnote by Walther Stein in 1907. See Appendix X.

month permitting *Will. Caxton uys Engelant* to reside in the city until the 16th of August next following. Eight days before the date of expiry a second permission was granted him, this time not due to expire until Xmas Day. During this period, Caxton tells us, on September 19th he finished his translation of the "Recueil des histoires de Troies" and thus fulfilled the "dreadful command" of his mistress, made at the beginning of the year.

We may suppose that it was not long after that date that he showed the work to the Duchess, but he was back again in Cologne before December 11th, for on that day a third permission of residence was granted to *Wilhem Kazsum*.

If we are right in conjecturing a diplomatic purpose which took him to Cologne, then certainly Caxton performed his office well, for by September Edward had broken his promises to the Hanse League and had reconfirmed the privileges of the Easterlings in London exclusively to the Cologne merchants.¹ Whereupon the Hanseatic League re-opened maritime warfare, with great success, for Edward had to go so far as to equip a fleet to send against them.²

What we were unable to presuppose at the beginning of his residence in the "holy city" may possibly hold good at this more advanced stage. Cologne would naturally be proud of its first printing-press and doubtless its secrets were jealously guarded from the everyday world: but it is equally certain that so important a man as Caxton then was would have little difficulty in obtaining permission to see it at work. When therefore Caxton left the Duchess again late in 1471 it is quite possible that he had the definite object in view of learning the new art. Already too during these years of close connection between Cologne and England, the Cologners had imported books into England.³

That Caxton must have learnt to print somewhere is obvious, that he did not learn from Colard Mansion at Bruges is almost certain, despite the arguments of William Blades;⁴ that he learnt at Cologne is extremely probable, since for this we have

¹ Hansrecesse II. 6, pp. 435, 475.

² Cal. Patent Rolls II. 305, 318. See Scofield, *Ed. IV.*

³ Hansisches Urkundenbuch. 9. 1439 (27, 53).

⁴ Unluckily Blades has been followed by all subsequent writers who have had cause to deal with Caxton and his art.

the direct testimony of his apprentice and successor, Wynkyn de Worde.

About four years after Caxton's death De Worde issued an edition of the "De proprietatibus rerum" of Bartholomaeus Anglicus,¹ translated into English. In the verses which form a prologue to this edition is to be found the quatrain:—

"And also of your charyte call to remembrance,
The Soule of Willaim Caxton, fyrste prynter of this book,
In Laten tongue at Coleyn, hymself to avaunce,
That every well disposed man may thereon look."

Blades argued that Wynkyn de Worde had made a mistake and adduced examples of other gross errors of his making, but such as stand on a rather different level: to clinch his argument he added that no edition of a *Bartholomaeus* had ever been discovered in any of Caxton's types. This, although true, is not so cogent as it seems at first glance.

It is most likely that Caxton printed or helped to print the book under the supervision of a printer already established, and with that printer's type and apparatus, thus initiating himself into the practice as well as the theory of the art. A beginner would scarcely go to the expense of furnishing himself with a type of his own before he had attempted the technical processes, in which he might well not become in any way an adept.

There is however an edition of the *De Proprietatibus*² which has no date nor name of place, but which was certainly printed at Cologne and probably round about these years. It is in the type of an anonymous printer, known as the "printer of the *Flores Augustini*," and only one date can certainly be attached to him, that of 1473, when he produced a copy of the *Dialogi decem variorum auctorum*; but all three books are from the same press.

One may disregard the theory of the late M. Madden³ that Caxton learnt the art at the convent of Weidenbach, near Cologne, which he pictures as a sort of typographical school

¹ Middleton in 1735 wrote in his *Origin of Printing in England*: "It is certain that the same Book was printed at Cologne by Jo. Koelhof and the first that appears of his printing."

² See Duff, p. 23, for a typographical description.

³ *Lettres d'un Bibliographe* II. pp. 46-52. Kapp cites this in his *Geschichte des Deutschen Buchhandels*.

for the period. The printed *Bartholomaeus* destroys any foundations which the theory may at one time have had. His observation that the book was a quite natural one to choose, since it was written by an Englishman, Bartholomew de Glanvil, of the family of the Earls of Suffolk and a member of the Franciscan Order, who flourished about 1360, may be taken for what it is worth.

The third permission of residence was due to expire on June 24th 1472 and evidently Caxton had not then completed his initiation into printing and his other duties at Cologne, for five days before that date a fourth permission is entered against his name. This last extension carried him to December of the same year but was not renewed.

For the date March 8th 1472, there appears in the Patent¹ Rolls a pardon to William Caxton, 'mercier' of London, for all offences committed by him before the previous fourth of the month. Its form is that of the conventional Pardon and there is nothing personal about the list of crimes enumerated, although it is interesting to note that *robbery* is omitted from among them.

The two clauses *certis considerationibus nos specialiter moventibus* and the emphatic *pardonavimus . . . et pardonamus* seem at first to imply that the type is that of a Special Pardon, but in comparing it with others of the same date and owing to the fact that it specifies a precise limit of time, it is probably more correct to assume it to be of the General type. So indeed the calendarists of the Patent Rolls described it.

General Pardons related to two technical classes, *offences* and *felonies* and to the former of these this entry would seem to belong; they were issued particularly to officials or accountants for relief from liabilities impending or likely to impend.

It is just possible that the William Caxton named is not the printer, but the only other William Causton of London whom we find recorded for the period was a "taillour."² It therefore remains to conjecture why such a pardon was issued to so blameless a person as our Caxton.

The first possibility is that on the restoration of Henry VI

¹ 12 Ed. IV. Pt. I. mem. 18. See Appendix XI.

² Plea Roll { A 62. m. 1 } (Guildhall Records).

Donatus
Donatus

[The text on this page is extremely faint and largely illegible due to fading and bleed-through. It appears to be a Latin document, possibly a letter or a legal record, containing several lines of text. Some words like "Donatus" are visible at the top left.]

FACSIMILE OF GENERAL PARDON TO WILLIAM CAXTON, 1472
(SLIGHTLY REDUCED)

See p. lxxxviii and p. cxxxix

to the throne of England in 1470 Caxton might have had connection with the Lancastrians such as could by enemies have been construed as treasonable. In such circumstances he might well have sought official pardon from the King to whom he had always remained loyal. This suggestion however has not much feasibility, because Caxton was not actually in the office of Governor at the time, unless perhaps he was dismissed from it by the Lancastrian authorities, and that too is unlikely for the reasons before mentioned and because his appointed successor, John Pykering, was, like most of the merchants, a stout Yorkist.

The second conjecture, and this is a probability, is that, being a prominent man of Kentish origin, Caxton considered it necessary to obtain a pardon in case he were thought to be in some way implicated in the late rebellion in Kent.

When the news spread in England that Warwick had landed at Plymouth with the avowed purpose of restoring Henry VI to the throne, the men of Kent, who were his staunch supporters, immediately "waxed wild" and, having gathered themselves into large companies, marched against the suburbs of London and there plundered and pillaged the beerhouses of "divers Dutchmen."

The authorities of London were much alarmed and took strong measures to prevent their entry into the city proper, and their fear only increased when the news arrived that Edward had fled to Burgundy, for that was the signal for a further horde of ruffians to break out into rioting. On this second occasion the prisons were broken open and a host of malefactors released who joined in a wild orgy of ravaging in the suburbs, in which Englishmen as well as foreigners suffered. Some order was however restored by Warwick and their rebellious activities were for a time repressed.

When however Edward returned to England and was fighting for his throne, there arose a popular leader, the Bastard of Fauconberg, who proclaimed himself "captain and leader of our liege lord King Henry's people of Kent." A mob of followers was speedily assembled from Kent, the Cinque Ports, Essex and Surrey, and with it at his back he marched on London.

There he presented an outwardly peaceful appearance and

applied to the Council to be allowed to pass through the city, giving his promise that no harm should be done. But Edward was back in England and had even chances of success and, besides this, the authorities of London had no wish to betray themselves into the hands of such ruffians, so they gave a reply which was as firm as it could well be, with the advice that Fauconberg should disperse his following and return whence he had come while there was yet time.

The Bastard responded by making a fierce onslaught upon London Bridge and a sharp fight ensued during which much damage was done in the Eastern outskirts of the city, but, finding that he was making little progress, he retired rapidly to Richmond, intending there to cross the river and make an attack upon Westminster.

This stratagem was however forestalled and forces were sent to meet the Kentishmen in that direction: another fierce fight took place, but the arrival of a first contingent of soldiery from the triumphant Edward utterly defeated the attempt and Fauconberg fell back upon the river, in which many of his men were drowned. He himself attempted to flee to Calais, but he was deserted by his own sailors and finally threw himself on Edward's mercy and delivered up all his ships to the king.

Retribution followed immediately, for Henry VI was only just dead when Gloucester marched into Kent with a large portion of Edward's army. Edward himself followed slowly, stopping here and there to punish those who had aided Fauconberg. Canterbury was deprived of its liberties and franchises despite a sudden display of loyalty at the King's arrival, and many of its prominent citizens were arrested and hanged. So many were the offenders that a special commission was set up to deal with them. When Edward returned to London he probably felt more completely master of England than ever he had done before.

Such an explanation of the Pardon would have been more satisfactory had Caxton been in England during this troublous period, but there is no reason to believe he so much as visited this country in 1470 or 1471. His brother Thomas, however, (if indeed he were his brother) also received a general pardon¹

¹ See above, p. xxiv.

on this occasion and this explanation seems to offer the best key to the mystery.

IX

War with the Hansards was too disconcerting and expensive a matter for Edward not to set about finding some means of mutual reconciliation and so, in February 1472, Hatclyf, Russell and Pickering¹ were commissioned to visit Burgundy. While their main business ostensibly was to seek to come to an understanding with Charles the Bold in the matter of commercial intercourse and the grievance existing between the English and the Burgundians, which the last diet at Bruges (1469) had failed to dissolve, they were also empowered to treat with the Master of the Hanse League for "real and perpetual peace."²

The embassy did not arrive in Bruges till April and then proved barren of result. Numerous conferences with the Hansards followed, but there was little more ever exchanged than hard words. The Hanse was firm that Edward's Council must annul its sentence against their fellows in London as "unjust and wrongful," and that all the confiscated goods must be restored as well as their old privileges. To this the King's ambassadors of course could not agree and the situation was one of deadlock.

The representatives of the Hanse went so far as to agree that their towns should be asked to send each one its representative to a further diet to be held at Utrecht. Meanwhile the war, little profitable now even to the Hansards, was continued.

In May 1473 all was ready for a diet, but as fate would have it, Rosse was taken ill at Calais. Everything was however arranged for a meeting to take place at Utrecht on July 1st and for hostilities to be suspended till October.³ Meanwhile Louis de Bruges had been entrusted with the control of the mercantile interests of the Hansards in Burgundy, a fact which in itself augured well for reconciliation.

The diet actually lasted from July 14th (the ambassadors

¹ See above, p. lxxviii.

² *Foedera* XI. 737, 740. *Hanserecesse* II. 6, pp. 456, 544.

³ *Treaty Roll* (French) 13 Ed. IV. m.m. 19, 24.

from Germany had been delayed by unfavourable winds and the English had in the mean time made a pilgrimage to Amersfoort "to avoid idleness") until the 19th September and its history is one of struggle.

At the very outset the English complained at the number of the ambassadors sent to meet them¹ and at the fact that nevertheless they had brought no "writing under seal" which empowered them to act for any other towns than Lubeck. Besides which, what commissions they had only held good until Assumption Day (August 15th).

The Hansards met this by agreeing to let three or four act for them all, but complained in their turn that the English had no commission "to repair and make restitutions." Day after day the discussion grew more heated and the English gradually had to concede more and more. Finally the Hansards set to work to write a "book" of their demands from Edward which was to be sent to him in England.

This took the Hansards three days, during which time Hatcluf hurried off to Nimwegen, to which Charles was then laying siege, to ask him to act as arbitrator between them and the Hansards and to instruct his own ambassadors to be "difficile to accord" with the Hansards until they came to some agreement with England. On his return the Hansards presented their book,² whereupon an interim was agreed to, while Edward considered the demands therein contained. Actually the diet did not sit from July 27th to September 1st.

During the month of August however the ambassadors were not idle and at Bruges, probably with the help of Caxton, they came to some agreement with Charles upon the matter of the proposed Anglo-Burgundian invasion of France, but on the "matter of merchants" no progress was made.

Edward's answer to the Hansards was that he could do nothing till he had consulted Parliament in October, but he thought that they ought to agree to quit hostilities for the time being. This however they declined to do.

Events then moved quickly. Charles the Bold came to a separate understanding with the Hanse in defiance of his promise. The English had perforce to show a milder front

¹ There were twenty of them.

² For full text see *Hanserecesses* II. 7, pp. 92-100.

than ever, and in the end Edward was given till December finally to decide the essential points, which were: first, an indemnity; second, the renewal of all old privileges; and third (and on this they were most firmly insistent of all), the expulsion of the Cologne men from England.

On July 28th Edward confirmed the privileges to the Hanse¹ merchants and thus legally abandoned the Cologners, who talked and wrote bitterly of the King's perfidy. Edward however had done everything in his power to prevent their betrayal and had given them a friendly warning of what they might expect directly the possibility arose: besides which he extended their privileges until the last possible day, the 31st of July, on the understanding however that they must vacate the Steelyard by the first of that month.

Meanwhile he so importuned the Hanse League to re-admit the city of Cologne to membership that it had begun to listen, and Edward was able to extend the tenancy of the Steelyard to them till the end of July and the rest of their privileges during his pleasure.² They were finally reinstated in the League in August 1476.

July 20th 1474 saw the ratification of the treaty of Utrecht and on the 22nd Alexander Legh, chaplain and almoner to the King, was empowered to carry ratification to the Hansards at Bruges. Edward also gave him his letters patent for the payment of £10,000 out of the customs and subsidies imported and exported by them. This marked the highest point of success ever reached by the Hanse League in England.

When Legh met John Duerkoop, the League's representative, at Bruges the latter found fault with certain points in the writing and sealing of the documents of ratification, and in his turn Legh discovered defects in the two documents sent by the League in exchange. It was thereupon agreed that new documents should be provided by both parties before November 1 and that the original parchments should be left in the care of the Prior of the Carmelite monastery, in which the Bruges Hansards had the use of a chapel.

This little formal ceremony took place actually in August in the *Refectorium*: Legh and Duerkoop showed their com-

¹ Treaty Roll, 14 Ed. IV. mm. 25, 26.

² Cal. Pat. Rolls II. 445, 452.

missions to the Prior, made a statement as to the contents of the documents, which were read, compared, and deposited by the Prior in a wooden chest in the presence of two accredited witnesses, William Caxton, described as "anglico," and Bertram Bercholf, "almano," to be produced again by the Prior only at the express wish of both the parties.¹

On October 4th Wanmate and Brekerfeld arrived in England to receive restoration on behalf of the Hanseatic League, but neither Edward nor his proper ambassadors was in London at the time, so it was not until December 14th that the grant of £10,000 was sealed and the Cologners turned out of the Steelyard.

On the previous December 1st (1474) John Morton, Thomas Montgomery, John Scot, Hatclyf, Roos, Tyrell, Caxton and Eliot had been commissioned to treat with the commissaries of the Duke of Burgundy concerning a true estimation and fixed value of currency,² and on December 26th Edward by Act of Parliament fully reconfirmed the privileges granted by Richard II and succeeding kings to the Hansards in England.³

Scot and Hatclyf arrived at Bruges early in January 1475 and successfully arranged not only the matter of coinage but also a final peace between England and Burgundy. While in Bruges they offered once more to make the postponed exchange of the documents of ratification. It was then found that Legh had failed to make clear that all the three documents were to be copied anew and only one was forthcoming. Although therefore all was now satisfactory to both parties the exchange did not take place, but the English agreed to send the remaining two before Easter.

These were actually to be sent to William Caxton at Bruges, as we learn from a letter from Wanmate in Dutch, contained in the Hanserecesse and dated April 20th 1475.⁴ This letter also contains mention that a document 'such as the people of Cologne are using daily concerning the old privileges of the Hanseatic League' was also to be sent to Caxton. This appears to have been in connection with the payment of rents and other dues incurred by their tenancy of the Steelyard.

¹ Hanserecesse II. 7, p. 428. See Appendix XIII.

² Treaty Roll, 14 Ed. IV. m. 6. See Appendix XII.

³ Ibid. mem. 29.

⁴ Hanserecesse II. 7, p. 466. See Appendix XVI.

In effect the documents did not reach Caxton for some months, for it was not until August 20th that "Kaufmann¹ Wilhem Caxton" and "Notar Wilhem Dollyng" were empowered by the king to execute the exchange of ratifications. The actual event took place on September 7th, when Caxton and Dollyng placed in the hands of Duerkoop, Goswin de Cousvelden and Gerhard Bruns, Secretary to the League, the three documents from Edward and received the two newly-written ratifications from the Hansards.²

Now that peace had at last been achieved both with the Hanse League and with Burgundy, Edward immediately set about the proposed Anglo-Burgundian invasion of France. At the end of June (1475) he crossed with an army to Calais, but his poor prowess in the campaign, Charles the Bold's defection and the mercenary settlement which was effected by Louis of France do not concern us. Our interest lies solely in the fact that William Caxton, "commissaris ende facteur van den³ Coninc van Engellant," was entrusted with the task of acquiring in Holland and Seeland ships for the invasion.

That this task was not easy we learn from the *Rentmeesters-rekeningen van Noord-Holland*, an extract from which, never before printed, appears in the Appendix.⁴

Gysbertus van der Mye and William Caxton set out on April 23rd, 1475, from the Hague at the express command of the President of the Council of Holland to attend to the fitting out of certain ships lying in Dutch waters for the transportation of the English King and his army. Van der Mye's task was to escort Caxton to the chief towns of the district, Delf, Rotterdam, Gouda, Middelburg, Flushing and others, and to present him to their respective authorities.

They bore a special mandate from the President commanding that Caxton in the name of the English King, the Duke's brother-in-law, should be supplied with any suitable ships they might have at their disposal. But the sailors Caxton selected to man these vessels caused a great deal of trouble by their

¹ Hanserecesse II. 7, p. 477. See Appendix XVII.

² Ibid. p. 478. See Appendix XVIII. and Diplomatic Document 554.

³ This is a curious and provoking description of the servant of the Duchess of Burgundy! In Dip. Doc. 554. he is merely "Willielmus Caxton mercatorius."

⁴ See Appendix XIV.

intractability, for they looked to him 'for so many unreasonable promises and rewards' that he found it impossible to prepare a single ship in a fitting manner.

The local authorities were therefore urged to use every available coercive measure to prevent the delay of the English expedition which was likely to be caused.

The round of visits took thirty-three days to perform, and the whole thing proved very costly, for the sailors finally insisted on a month's pay in advance.

Of their visit to Gouda in South Holland the Municipal Accounts of that town testify, for they record two public dinners given in honour of William Caxton and Van der Mye for a month unspecified in the year 1475.¹ These entries complete our present knowledge of Caxton as foreign ambassador.

X

When Caxton returned from Cologne towards the end of 1472 we may safely conclude that he had learnt the art of printing, but that he did not immediately set up a press for himself is fairly obvious, for the first book he printed seems not to have appeared until 1475. It was Gordon Duff who threw light on what was happening in the interim.

It is true that in 1471 Cologne was the nearest printing-centre to Bruges, but within the years immediately following Thierry Martens and John of Westphalia commenced printing at Alost and John Veldener was at Louvain, both much nearer Bruges.

"Caxton's preparations for setting up a printing-press on his own account were probably made in 1474. (The quotation is from Duff's monograph for the Caxton Club.)² His assistant or partner, Colard Mansion, by profession a writer and illuminator of manuscripts, is entered as such in the books of the Guild of St. John from 1454 to 1473, when his connexion with the guild ceases. This may point to two things: he had either left Bruges, perhaps in search of printing material, or had changed his profession; and the former seems the most probable explanation.

¹ Kesper, "Geschiedenis van het Gymnasium te Gouda." The month was probably June. See Appendix XV.

² "William Caxton" (1905), p. 26.

“If Caxton was assisted by any outside printer in the preparation of his type, there can be little doubt that that printer was John Veldener of Louvain. Veldener was matriculated at Louvain in the faculty of medicine, July 30, 1473. In August, 1474, in an edition of the *Consolatio peccatorum* of Jacobus de Theramo, printed by him, there is a prefatory letter addressed ‘Johanni Veldener, artis impressoriae magistro,’ showing that he was by that time a printer. He was also a type-founder, and in 1475 he made use of a type in many respects identical with one ¹ used by Caxton.

“In body they are precisely the same, and in most of the letters they are to all appearances identical; and the fact of their appearance about the same time in the *Lectura super institutionibus* of Angelus de Aretio, printed at Louvain by Veldener, and in the *Quatre dernieres choses*, printed at Bruges by Caxton, would certainly appear to point to some connexion between the two printers.

“Furnished with a press and two founts of type,² both of West Flandres kind and cut in imitation of the ordinary book-hand, William Caxton and Colard Mansion started on their career as printers.”

Colard Mansion’s name certainly does not appear in the Guild’s records for 1473–1474, but we learn from the following entry that his fee was duly paid:—

“ 1474–1475 ³

folio 75r.	Colaert Manchion	vj gr.
„ 80.	Item jorys Caelwaert betaelt van Coellaerts Mäschiens jaer welke gheviel int jaer lxxij ^{tich} .	v s.gr.
	Noch ontfaen over pelder gelde Colard Mansioens wyf	—gr.”

(Item, George Caelwaert paid Colard Mansion’s year, which fell due in the year ’73. . . .)

Again received for funeral expenses of Colard Mansion’s wife.)

¹ Type No. 2.

² Types Nos. 1 & 2.

³ See Van Praet, p. 81 *et seq.*

There is then a gap, but he reappears in 1482-3:—¹

“ folio 113r. Van Colard Manchion vj gr.”

It is certain that a printing press was assembled and established, for Mansion, under the patronage of Louis de Bruges, and Caxton, doubtless still under that of the Duchess, produced their first books in 1475.

From the first Caxton resolved to print for English readers and the “Recuyell of the Histories of Troye” was translated by him into English from the version “composed and drawn out of dyuerce bookes of latyn in to Frensshe by the ryght venerable persone and worshipfull man, Raoul le ffeure. prest and chapelayn vnto the ryght noble gloryous and mighty prynce in his tyme Phelip duc of Bourgoyne.”

It was upon this translation that he had worked in his leisure time between the years 1469 and 1471, continuing at the “dredefull commandement” of Margaret, Duchess of Burgundy, that which he had once abandoned in despair.

His first impulse to translate the work, he tells us, came from his appreciation of the “nouelte” and “fayr langage of frenshe. whyche was in prose so well and compendiously sette and wretton” that he was seized with that desire which assails all lovers of fair things, the desire to show to others the beauties which have delighted themselves. Wherefore, because, says Caxton,

“ I . . . never had seen hit in oure englisch tonge, I
“ thought in myself hit shold be a good besynes to trans-
“ late hyt into oure englisch, to thende that hyt myght be
“ had as well in the royame of England as in other
“ landes.”

The thought that he was engaged upon pioneer work spurred him on throughout the first two books² and for the third book the translation of “that worshipfull and religious man dan Iohn Lidgate monke of Burye” was at hand in verse³ to aid him to the completion of his prose text. That worthy man he had no wish to rival, but “for as moche as dyuerce men ben of

¹ See Additional Note 2.

² “ And for as moche as I suppose the said two bookes been not had to fore this tyme in oure Englisch langage / therefore I had the better will to accomplishe the said werke.”—Ep. to Bk. II.

³ Bks. I.—IV. (1412–20).

dyuerce desyres, some to rede in Ryme, and some in prose" he felt himself justified.

In the following year the Bruges press produced an edition of the same book in Le Fevre's French, but it is uncertain what share Caxton himself had in the work: it offers however a convenient edition for a study of Caxton's powers of translation. The Prologue itself begins as a translation from the French, but rapidly ceases to be even an adaptation.

A second important book however was also produced in 1475—"The play and Game of the Chess Moralised"—in which Life is likened to that game. The original Latin version of *Jacobus de Cessolis* had been independently translated by two Frenchmen, Jean Faron and Jean de Vignay, and it would seem that Caxton used both French versions, although the Prologue is an adaptation of De Vignay's own prologue. This book Caxton dedicated to the King's brother Clarence, then made Earl of Warwick, and Mr. Plomer is moved by it to take up the cudgels against those depreciators of Caxton who impugn him for lack of originality.¹ The highly intellectual and moral tone of the work so pleased him that he for the second time set about translating for the benefit of his fellow Englishmen: he was neither requested to do it, nor paid for doing it. He even describes himself as "unknowen" to Clarence, in a passage which is an addition and *not* suggested by De Vignay's prologue. There needs no greater proof of his good taste and disinterestedness.

The Conclusion states that the work was "Fynysshid on the last day of marche the yer of our lord god. a thousand foure honderd and lxxiiii" (N.S. 1475), but this applies more probably to the translation than to the printing. Very likely however the completion of translation and impression were not separated by many months.

The second edition of 1483 throws some little more light on the history of the first: the prologue is no longer an adaptation, but a straightforward piece of original English, showing that eight years had gone to make a great improvement in Caxton's mastery of English style, and therein he states that

"there was an excellent doctour of dyuynyte in the royaume
"of Fraunce, of the ordre of thospytal of Saynt Johns of

¹ "William Caxton," p. 59.

"Jherusalem, whiche . . . hath made a book of the
 "chesse moralysed: which at suche tyme as I was resident
 "in brudgys . . . cam into my handes." He approved
 of it greatly:

"I delybered in my self to translate it in to oure maternal
 "tonge, and when I so had achyeued the sayd translacion,
 "I dyde doo sette in enprynte a certeyn nombre of theym,
 "whiche anone were depressoed and solde."

From the last phrases it would appear that Caxton did not actually set up the first edition in type himself, but that he *caused it to be done*,¹ either by Mansion or an assistant, if they possessed one so early in their joint career. The second edition is the third book which Caxton embellished with illustrations: "I haue purposed to enprynte it, shewyng therin the figures of such persones as longe to the playe."

The third chapter of the third 'tractate' of the Chess Book deals with notaries, advocates and scriveners, and Caxton seems to have had such personal feelings on the matter as to cause him to add a short but bitter passage to the words of his original. The paragraph is interesting in itself, but particularly is it significant that Caxton showed so complete a familiarity with the main departments of English Law as to enumerate those servants of it "that lange (belong) to the courtes of the chauncery, kinges benche, comyn place,² cheker, ressayt³ and helle." Moreover, the fact that Caxton should in 1475 mention the "hell," which was the name given to a part of the old lawcourts at Westminster,⁴ argues his intimate knowledge of the neighbourhood before he returned to England to settle there.

Again in the fourth book Caxton's feelings break through into his text,⁵ and there he laments the glory and prosperity which England once enjoyed: "how was renomede the noble royaume of Englonde," he cries, "all the worlde dredde hit and spack worship of hit," but the Hundred Years War had closed

¹ dyde doo = fit faire.

² The obsolete form of *common pleas*, due perhaps to the Latin 'placita.' Westminster was formerly the seat of this bench.

³ Caxton himself was later connected with the King's Receipt. See p. cxxiii and Appendix XXIV.

⁴ Apparently used on occasion as a Record Office. N.E.D.

⁵ Cap. 1. f. 63. l. 9 *et seq.*

in loss and ignominy for his native land and no longer was there "prosperitie in whiche was Iustice." Caxton, who had "laboured in the realun" and done business with them that "sayle on the see," must particularly have felt the lawless state to which the Wars of the Roses had reduced England. We are told that in the reign of Edward IV systems of law and punishment fell into complete collapse in the provinces, and in London were maintained only with difficulty.¹ As Caxton looked about him at Bruges he could see a riot of wealth, albeit that that too was not so great as it once was, and a code of law rigidly enforced by the authorities of the town and of the different "nations" for their mutual benefit. The stories he heard of England well merited the prayer, "God saue that noble royaume and sende good true and politicque counceyllours to the gouernours of the same."

The same note is heard in the Conclusion :

"I pray god . . . to saue the kyng . . . and to gyue hym
"grace to yssue as a kyng & tabounde in all vertues,
"& to be assisted with all other his lordes in such wyse
"yt his noble royaume of England may prospere &
"habounde in vertues, and yt synne may be eschewed,
"iustice kepte, the royaume defended, good men rewardid,
"malefactours² punysshid & the ydle peple to be put to
"laboure."

But in 1483, when concluding the second edition, Caxton perhaps had found that things were not so black as they had been painted or that years of peace had brought improvement, for he makes there only this more personal appeal :

"Thenue late euery man, of what condycion he be, that
"redyth or herith this litel book redde, take thereby
"ensaumple to amende hym."

During the year 1475 or in early 1476³ Caxton was involved in a Chancery suit of not very great importance. William Caxton was indebted to one, John Neve, citizen and

¹ English Historical Review, April 1917.

² Owing to the misused benefits of sanctuary and clergy a large percentage of malefactors escaped all punishment.

³ The inscription makes it clear that the case lies either between 1475 and 1480, or 1483 and 1485, and since Caxton is described as still abroad, there can be little doubt of the approximate date. He returned to England in 1476.

mercator of London, to the extent of £140 and, desiring to make payment, wrote to another mercator, John Salford, who was in possession of some of Caxton's goods valued rather more than that sum, to request him to sell them and make payment to Neve. Salford, after some delay, delivered to Neve an instalment of £28, but asked to be excused payment of the remainder until Christmastide, when, he argued, he would be able more profitably to sell the goods and thus benefit Caxton. Neve was willing to permit this postponement, but discovered that in the interim Salford had brought an action of debt against Caxton on his own account, claiming the goods in his possession as settlement and therefore freeing himself from his obligation to Neve.

It is clear that Caxton did not actually owe Salford a penny. Neve had perforce also to sue Caxton for debt in order that Caxton's goods, then in Salford's hands, might be attached by the authorities of the City of London and thus secured until the arbitration was completed.¹ Of the outcome there is no record: but there was no element in the case which was likely to leave Caxton's name anything but unsullied.

During the year 1476 there issued from the Bruges press "*Les Quatre derrenieres choses*," "*Le Recueil*,"² and perhaps "*Les Fais de Jason*" and "*Meditacions sur les sept pseaulmes*"—the last almost certainly printed by Mansion alone.

Doubtless Caxton had had in mind ever since 1472 the idea of returning to England: in 1476 he made the final decision to do so. His natural regret at leaving the scene of thirty years of his lifework must have been strengthened by the unmistakable signs of decay he saw around him. In June the rashness of Charles the Bold led to a crowning blunder and the battle of Morat ruined the Burgundian power. In January 1477 he was killed before Nanci and his wife, the one-time Princess of York, retired to Malines and there led a life of privacy far removed from her former riches and power.

On the other hand Edward was absolutely firmly established in England and ready to receive into favour the new art practised by so faithful a servant as William Caxton.

¹ E.C.P. 64. 558. See Appendix XXI.

² See above, p. xcix.

XI

Caxton appears to have returned to England towards the close of the year 1476 and to have settled at Westminster. He was certainly established there by November of the next year, for the "Dictes and Sayings" was issued from his Westminster press on the eighteenth of that month. Once again however the exact date is uncertain, although the evidence points to the month of September 1476, for the Account Roll of John Esteney,¹ Sacrist of Westminster Abbey, contains the entry:—

"De alia shopa ididem dimissa Will(ielm)o
Caxton per annum x s."

This was for a year's tenancy ending Michaelmas 1477.²

That Caxton paid a whole year's rent at the outset is evidenced both by the wording of the entry and the fact that subsequent yearly repetitions were for the same amount. These yearly entries in the Sacrist's Rolls are the most important series of the later Caxton records, for they extend from the year 1476 to the year 1493 almost without a break and show that in 1491-2 the 'shops' were "now in the hands of John Wynkyn," that is, Wynken de Worde, who was Caxton's assistant and who carried on the business after Caxton's death.

From 1476 to 1481-2 Caxton was renting only the one shop from the Sacrist, but in 1483-4 he paid two shillings and sixpence for an additional one. This latter continued to be allotted to him during subsequent years although he paid nothing for it because he was making no actual use of it. In 1486-7 a third *shopa* appears as allotted to Caxton, but this too he did not pay for, but perhaps the most interesting entry of all is for the year 1488-9, when Caxton paid fourpence for a shop rented for one week *while Parliament was sitting*. What connexion Caxton had with Parliament must be left to conjecture.

Miss Scofield however discovered the record³ of Letters of Protection for one year's duration issued on December 2, 1476,

¹ Later became Abbot; he seems to have appreciated Caxton's work and may well have become the printer's friend. See Prol. to "Eneydos."

² W.A.M. Sacrist's Roll (1476-7). See Appendix XXIII.

³ Treaty Roll, 16 Ed. IV. m. 8. Scofield, II. p. 455. See Appendix XIX.

to William Caxton, and this led her to suppose that he was not at that time as yet in England. Nevertheless there seems to be little need to take so contrary a line of argument, for the safe shipment of press and materials might well have taken some time after Caxton, his wife and daughter had themselves landed in England, or perhaps outstanding business made it necessary for him to spend further time on the Continent during the succeeding months. It is interesting to note that Caxton's protection was issued under the name (and probably at the written request) of Lord Hastings, Lieutenant-General of Calais, whereas most protections of the period appear in the name of the Victuallers.¹

The latest Caxton discovery² at the Public Record Office, that of an Indulgence of Pope Sixtus IV printed by Caxton³ and dated by hand 13 December 1476, gives additional support to the theory that Caxton must have been settled at Westminster a good while before December 2.

There have been many theories as to why Caxton settled in Westminster rather than in the City of London. It has been pointed out that the Wool Staple was centred at Westminster and that thus Caxton established himself near to his friends:⁴ that there might well have been some show of antagonism from the Writers and Scriveners who formed a large proportion of the Guild of Stationers and of which Caxton was not even a member, for which reason he might seek sanctuary at Westminster, in which "powerful shelter and gracious seat of learning he would be free from vexatious restrictions and trade jealousies":⁵ or thirdly, that he was drawn thither by the proximity of the Court, "for, as he says himself, he hoped 'by favour and countenance of his Highness the King to succeed.'"⁶ All three of these may indeed have had some bearing upon Caxton's decision.

¹ See Chancery Warrants I, Bills of Privy Seal. Drapers, fishmongers, yeomen, physicians, couriers, all received protection as in the following of Rosse, victualler of Calais. I was able to find the actual Bill corresponding to the entry in the Treaty Roll. [C.W.I. 1319. 23.] See Appendix XX. One must suppose that in all cases the "safe custody, victualling and defence of Calais" was only nominal.

² Made in February 1928.

³ In type No. 2.

⁴ A. N. Butt.

⁵ Gordon Duff.

⁶ Canon Westlake: "Westminster: a Study."

A fourth theory also has some plausibility: it is that Caxton's father was at the time living at Westminster and that he wished to be near him in his declining years. This is supported by the Warden's Account of St. Margaret's, Westminster, which has this entry in the Burial Fees, for 1478:¹

"Itm. the day of the burying of William Caxton
for ij torches and iiij tapirs at a lowe
masse xx d."

Caxton's father need not have been more than seventy-five years of age in this year, so this entry may be the record of his burial. If however one takes Thomas Caxton to have been the son of the same father, then one must reckon the latter to have arrived by 1478 at the age of about one hundred and three years!

There is however one fact which seems to outweigh all the others. In 1473-4 there was instituted at Westminster a monk named Richard Caxton or Caston. He rapidly became a man of some importance and by 1498 was Quartus Prior and in 1500 Master of the Novices in the Abbey. In 1501-2 he was made custodian of the Richard II and Anne manors and by 1503 was Treasurer of the Queen's manors. From 1501 until he died in 1504 he was Sacrist of the Abbey.²

Merely to find a Caxton in a position of some authority at Westminster at the time when the printer chose to settle there is of no small significance. But there are other links in the chain of evidence which points to a relationship between William and Richard.

The list of monks instituted in 1473-4 is not alphabetical and therefore it is not for this reason that the name of one W. Lokyngton immediately follows that of Richard Caxton. It is at least unlikely that Caxton and Lokyngton were not friends.

Now, by 1482, William Caxton had flourished to such an

¹ The Records of St. Margaret's parish also supply the information that an *Oliver Caxton* was buried there in 1465. This is almost certainly the same as Oliver Caxton, *civis et pelliparius london*, to whom letters of protection were given four years earlier [C.W.I. 1299. 19] This record is particularly interesting because he is described as "Oliuer Caston, alias Oliuer Causton, alias Oliuer Caxton"—with the three prevalent forms of the name referring to one man.

² Pearce—"The Monks of Westminster."

extent that he found it necessary to hire another room in the Abbey. The one that he then took over was situated above the gate of the Almonry, and the following is the entry in the Almoner's Roll ¹ concerning it:—

“De Camera supra portam exteriorem nuper de D(auid)
Selley ad T(erminum) xl annorum hoc anno xxxvj^o
iam in tenencia Will(ielm)i Caxton per annum
iij s. iiij d.”

It is clear therefore that this *camera* ² was at one time in the possession of David Selley, citizen and vintner ³ of London, and described by Canon Westlake as a “man of considerable wealth and influence.” ⁴ From the will ⁵ of Cecile Selley, his widow, which was proved in 1474, one learns that he had at that time not been long dead and that his appointed executors were Walter Lokyngton and Robert Spayne. Selley had possessed the chamber on a lease of forty years, which was drawing near to expiry when Caxton took up his residence therein.

In 1479–80 the rent had been paid by Lokyngton, whether as executor under Selley's will or because he was actually in occupation cannot now be determined. In 1483–4 the ownership passed into the hands of the Prior and a corresponding entry appears in his record-book, while the Almoner's Roll reads:— ⁶

“De camera supra portam exteriorem nuper de Dd. Selley
ad terminum xl annorum doc anno xxxvij^o iam in
manibus prioris nichil hoc anno n^o.”

In 1486–7 the lease is said to be “in xl et ultimo anno.” ⁷ What is more likely than that William and Richard Caxton and Lokyngton formed the nucleus of a little circle of friends?

Still another small point bears out the suggestion. When the “Seyny Books” ⁸ were repaired, Richard Caxton subscribed

¹ W.A.M. 19091 (1482–3). See Appendix XXIII.

² The indentures of the lease describe it as measuring eighteen and a half feet by seven feet. W.A.M. 17768.

³ W.A.M. 17768.

⁴ “Westminster Abbey.”

⁵ P.C.C. 16 Wattys.

⁶ W.A.M. 19092.

⁷ W.A.M. 19095.

⁸ What exactly the Seyny Books were is still a matter for conjecture. See “The MSS. of Westminster Abbey,” p. 21.

two shillings towards the cost and "W. Lokyngton paieth for the peecyng of the bokes. And also fyndith the writer his bedd." Now although this work was not finished until 1492, the year after William Caxton died, it is most likely that it was executed in Caxton's workshop, probably once more at the suggestion of Richard Caxton.

We must here remind ourselves¹ that Richard Caxton was most probably the means by which the De Causton documents entered the Abbey Muniments, but that Thomas Caxton also appears among them, and if Thomas really were William's brother it is not unlikely that all three were relatives and that it was through the kind offices of Richard that William settled in the Sanctuary of Westminster.

In the year 1477 Caxton produced from his press a number of small books² and two more important works, which come under our consideration because of Caxton's original writing concerning them. The first is the "Dictes and Sayengis of the Philosophres" and the second the "Life of Jason."

Of the "Dictes and Sayengis" there appeared a second edition in or about 1479 and a third edition some ten years later still,³ but there also appear variant forms of the first edition which point to a re-issue during the year 1477. This re-issue is distinguished only by the addition of a colophon,⁴ which gives a brief restatement of the book's authorship and the date of the impression—"the xvij day of the moneth of Nouembre and the seuenteth yere of the regne of kyng Edward the fourth."

The second edition was printed from the re-issue of the first and repeats the colophon. Throughout the Epilogue the wording compares page for page but not line for line. The third edition was probably not set up from the second but from the first.⁵

¹ See above, p. xxxii.

² Horae I, Infancia Saluatoris, Book of Courtesy I, Parvus Catho I and II, Anelida and Arcite, Temple of Bras, Chorle and the Birde I and II, Hors, ghoos and sheep I and II, Stans puer, Temple of Glas, Handbill, Ordinale.

³ Duff 1489 : Br. Mus. Cat. 1490 f

⁴ See p. 81.

⁵ For instance *connyguly* (1) is amended to *connygly* (2), but (3) goes straight to (1) and corrects to *connyngly* : again (1) has *unto to* (where *to* is redundant), (2) corrects *unto the*, but (3) perpetuates *unto to* of (1). (3) repeats *women* from (1), whereas (2) has *wymen*. There are other examples.

Earl Rivers, who translated the work from the French, himself wrote an explanatory prologue¹ to it which Caxton printed, and since he may be considered as an excellent example of the educated writer of his day, this piece of original writing forms a useful basis of comparison by which to judge Caxton's style. One may say that, if Caxton does not quite equal its style on his first return to England, by the time he has reached his middle period of translation (1480-2) there is little to choose between them.

Caxton added a long epilogue, which contained some additional translation, and therein he showed an unmistakable kinship with Chaucer. That he loved and appreciated Chaucer we know,² but that he shared Chaucer's power of light and subtle humour is perhaps not quite so generally evident.

Earl Rivers had sent his translation to Caxton asking him to amend any defects he might find therein and to set it in print. No fault could Caxton find save that his lord had omitted certain sayings of Socrates concerning women. These he added "apart" in the Epilogue, but not without excuses. And what a variety of them he gives!

Perhaps some fair lady had persuaded Earl Rivers to leave out that particular section from his work? Or perhaps he had been "amerous on somme noble lady. for whos loue he wold not sette yt in hys book"? "Or ellys for the very affeccion and good wylle that he hath unto alle ladyes & gentywomen"? Or perhaps those sayings were not in his lord's copy? Or maybe "the wynde had blowe ouer the leef. at the tyme of translacion of his book"? In any case his lord should have remembered that "Socrates was a Greke boren in a ferre Contre from hens. whyche contre is alle of othre condicions than thys is . . . for I wote wel. of what someuer condicion women ben in Grece. the women of this contre ben right good, wyse, playsant, humble, discrete, sobre, chast, obedyent to their husbondes, trewe, secrete, stedfast, euer besy, & neuer ydle, attemperat in speking, and vertuuous in all ther werkes. *or atte lest sholde be soo!*"³

¹ See p. 111.

² *Canterbury Tales*, Boethius. See below, pp. cxviii, cxix.

³ The italics are mine.

Could anything be nearer the spirit of

“ *In principio*

“ *Mulier est hominis confusio.*

“ Madame, the sentence of this Latin is—

“ Womman is mannes joye and al his blis”¹

The Prologue to *Jason* enshrines a graceful piece of diplomacy, for the subject of the book is the story of the quest for the Golden Fleece, of which Burgundian Order Edward IV had lately been made a Knight. Caxton makes it clear with the utmost delicacy that although he was printing the work “under the proteccion & suffraunce” of the King, yet he does not presume to present it to him (for the reason that the King most likely had it in French “which he wel understandeth”) but craves with the permission of the King and of the “most excellent princesse” the queen, to present it to the young Prince of Wales “to thentente that he may begynne to lerne rede English” from out of it.

In the Prologue too occurs one of the few personal passages which are to be found in Caxton’s books. In discussing the foundation of the Order of the Golden Fleece he writes:—

“ Well wote I that the noble Duc Philippe firste foundeur
“ of this sayd ordre, dyd doo maken a chambre in the
“ Castell of Hesdyn, where in was craftyly and curiously
“ (with skill and ingenuity) depeynted the conqueste of
“ the golden flese by the said Iason, in whiche chambre I
“ haue ben and seen the sayde historie so depeynted, & in
“ remembraunce of medea and her connyng & science. he
“ had do make in the seyde chambre by subtil engyn that
“ when he wolde it shuld seme that it lightend, then
“ thondre, snow & rayne; and all within the sayde chambre
“ as ofte tymes & when it shuld please him.”²

The Epilogue contains a little further information upon the subject of *Jason*, gleaned by Caxton from Boccaccio.

The *Moral Proverbs* of Christine de Pisan, which were printed in 1478, have a brief epilogue consisting of two verses. The second stanza is certainly by Caxton, the first is more probably by Earl Rivers, who was again the translator. No poetic merit whatever can be claimed for any of the lines.

¹ Chaucer: *Nonne Prestes Tale*, ll. 343-6.

² See p. 33.

In this same year Caxton printed two of Chaucer's works, the *Canterbury Tales* and the *Boethius*; the latter, as he tells us in the epilogue, "atte request of a synguler frende and gossib of myne," to whose desire he was all the more ready to concede because the matter of the work was so worthy of popularisation.

"I william Caxton," he wrote, "haue done my debvoir (duty) & payne tenprynte it in fourme as is here afore made, In hopyng that it shal prouffite moche peple to the wele & helth of their soules, and for to haue and kepe the better pacience in aduersites."

"The synguler frende" can never be identified with certainty, but one cannot resist suggesting that he was no other than William Pratt, who was Caxton's friend as early as 1453¹ and who, just before his death which occurred in 1486, requested him to print another book of sound instruction, the *Book of Good Manners*.² In the prologue to that book Caxton speaks of him as "a speycal frende of myn" and "of hym whyche was my synguler frende, and of olde knowlege."

William Pratt was a Kentishman and a citizen and mercer of London, and from his will he appears to have been (at least in later life) a man of much austere piety. Three clauses from that will³ may suffice to throw light upon the man whose friendship Caxton cherished for more than thirty years:—

"Item, I will my burying and funerall expenses be doon in the most lowliest & deuoute wise that myn executors⁴ shall mowe do to the pleasur of almyghty god and helthe of my soule, withoute any pompe or vayne glorye to the World, and no monythis mynd opynly to be kept for me.

"Item, I will that ther ne neyther cloth of gold nor cloth of silk laide upon my body to my buryngward, but oonely as much blake wole cloth as shall suffice to make two gownes & a crosse of white lynnem.

"Item, I woll that euery person housholder of the said parish of Aldermanbury the day of my decease having a wiff then leving shall have vjd, and hem wyth noon wiff iiijd."

¹ See above, p. xlv. ² Printed 1487. ³ P.C.C. 25 Logge.

⁴ S. Middleton, Wm. Tenalie, Thos. Squire.

At the close of *Boethius* there follows an epitaph to Chaucer in Latin verse and four lines of Latin which may perhaps have been composed by Caxton himself.

On February 2nd, 1479,¹ Earl Rivers, who continued to occupy himself with translations² when he "myght haue the leysur, whiche was but startemele,"³ sent to Caxton a version which was printed as the "cordyale" of the French work concerning the *Quatre derrenieres Choses* or Four Last Things. This Caxton began to set up on the very next day, and the printing was finished by the 24th of March.

For June of the same year the Roll of the Issues⁴ of the Exchequer for the Easter Term contains the following entry:—

"To William Caxton. In money paid to his own hands
 "in discharge of 20l. for the Lord the King commanded
 "to be paid to the same William for certeyn causes and
 "matters performed by him for the said Lord the King.
 " By writ of the privy seal amongst the man-
 " dates of this term. 20l."

"Might not this have been for assistance to Edward IV and his retinue when fugitives at Bruges? Or was it in some way connected with the introduction of printing into England?" asked William Blades: but although Kings are proverbially long in making payment, the eight years which had lapsed between Edward's brief exile and that time do not render the first suggestion very plausible. That the King should have seen fit to subsidise the new art to the extent of about £400 in modern money⁵ is a suggestion not too unlikely to be tenable, but the entry expressly states that it is "for . . matters . . performed by him . . for the King."

Miss Aurner, however, the latest student of Caxton,⁶ makes an even wilder guess when she writes "Had Blades known of Caxton's service in the 'victualling and defence' of Calais and its marches he must also have considered this as an alternative in

¹ Caxton's Mcccclxxvij is Old Style dating.

² Caxton refers in this epilogue to the *Dictees* and *Moral Proverbs* and also to "dyuerse balades ayenst the seuen dedely synnes" which have not come down to us.

³ Modern "by fits and starts." Cp. "piecemeal."

⁴ Issue Roll, Easter, 19 Ed. IV. June 15.

⁵ Blades' estimate.

⁶ *Caxton*, by N. S. Aurner (1926), p. 40.

his suggestions to help 'the reader . . . choose his own solution.' We have seen that the 'victualling and defence' was only nominal and had no special and individual significance.¹

We know that at the very end of his life Caxton was engaged at Westminster in official business connected with the King's Receipt² and it seems not unreasonable to suppose that the year 1479 was largely occupied by similar official duties. This would explain why only three books³ are satisfactorily ascribable to that year.

Certainly Caxton was at this time and in his new circumstances still regarded as a man of importance and position, for his name appears among those who audited the Churchwardens' Accounts of St. Margaret's, Westminster, for the years 1478-80, 1480-82, and 1482-84.

The year 1480 marked a renewed devotion of Caxton's attention to the work of printing, as the list of books⁴ ascribed to that year shows, but unfortunately only one, *The Description of Britain*, contains any original writing from Caxton's pen and that is exceedingly brief. Neither prologue nor epilogue is of special interest: in the latter Caxton dates the completion of the work as August 18th, 1480.

During that or the previous month the Duchess of Burgundy (then Dowager-duchess) came to England to visit her brother and she remained till the close of September. One cannot but assume that she paid a visit to the Almonry during that time, there to see Caxton at work with his new press.

XII

In 1480 John Lettou, native of Lithuania, had set up as a printer in the City of London and from the first shown himself as a rival to be considered. He had evidently learnt the art from one of the more advanced European printers of his time and as a result his work was technically superior to Caxton's in every way. Neat double columns, signatures, and clear Gothic type, all went to set a standard to which Caxton had perforce to aspire: that he did then turn his attention to

¹ See above, p. civ, footnote 1.

² See below, p. cxiii and Appendix XXIV.

³ Corydale, *Dictes II*, *Nova Rhetorica*.

⁴ *Chronicles I*, *Description*, *Psalterium*, *Horae II*, *Festum Visitationis*, *Curia Sapientie*, *Vocabulary*, *Indulgence (2*)*, *Indulgence (4)*.

technicalities is evidenced by recast and new founts of type and the introduction of illustrations into the *Mirror of the World* in 1481. But to the end of his life Caxton showed a marked conservatism and disinclination to follow innovations, which was perhaps natural. It was Wynken de Worde who, after his death, put the Westminster press abreast of the time.

On the second day of January 1481 "in thabbay of Westmestre" Caxton set about translating the "Ymage du Monde," a French work probably by a writer named Gossouin of Bruges, translated from an equally obscure Latin original—*Speculum vel Imago Mundi*—which may or may not have been written by Vincent de Beauvais in the reign of St. Louis.

Whatever its origin, the book is one of the greatest interest, for it "treateth of the world and of the wondrous dyuision therof: in whiche book a man resonable may see and vnderstonde more clerer, by the vysytyng and seeyng of it and the figures therin, the situacion and moeyng of the firmament, and how the unyuersal erthe hangeth in the myddle of the same."

On the lines of the prologue to the French version Caxton himself wrote an introduction to the work in which he tells us the motive of his translation. That "honourable and worshipful man, Hugh Bryce," Alderman and citizen of London,¹ had offered to defray the cost of the work if Caxton would translate it for him, for he wanted to present it to William, Lord Hastings, Lieutenant of Calais, whom he begged to accept it. But Caxton's prologue expands to more than twice its length the prologue of Gossouin and is the first example of his growing mastery of English style.

His enthusiasm for the work was unbounded and he specially explains that it must not be read hastily but "treatably, auisedly and ordinatly that in suche thing. as he shal rede he suffre nothyng to pass, but that he vnderstonde it right well."

And the purpose is that he may comprehend the wonders of the world and "wherfor it was establisshid, wherof the debonayr lord hath don to vs so grete grace / that we euer ben bounden giue hym laude and worship, or ellys we had not ben any valew ne worth ony thyng / nomore than vnresonable beestes.

¹ Hugh Bryce too hailed from Kent and was a Mercer. He was knighted about the year 1472, and had been from time to time engaged in embassies with W. Caxton.

“Thenne late vs praye the maker and creatour of all creatures /
 “god all myghty / that at the begynnyng of this book it liste
 “hym of his most bounteous grace to departe with vs of the
 “same, that we may lerne, and that lerned to reteyne / & that
 “reteyned to teche, that we may haue so parfyght scyence and
 “knowleche of god, that we may gete therby the helthe of our
 “sowles, and to be partyners of his glorye permanent and without
 “ende in heuen Amen.”

The epilogue tells us that Caxton finished his translation on the 8th of March “under the noble proteccion” of Edward the King: Caxton dutifully prays God to be the King’s protector and “agayn all his Enemyes, and gyue hym grace to subdue them, and inespéciall them that haue late enterprised agayn right and reson to make warre within the Royaume.”

This passage may refer to the final battles of the War of the Roses and to the general unrest in England, but it may equally be a feeling allusion to the Kentish rebellion which appears to have touched Caxton nearly.¹

In the actual text occurs a 17-line interpolation by Caxton himself concerning “St. Patrick’s Purgatory” and his discussion thereof with a “hye chanon of Waterford” and “sir John de banste knyght of bruggis.” Like a good Kentishman however he omitted Gossouin’s allusion to the ‘tailed men’ of his county. The second edition, which appeared in 1490, adds nothing to the first.

On June 6th of the same year Caxton finished his translation of *Reynard the Fox* from the “dutche.”² In the prologue he gives what is really his justification for the existence of fiction:—

“Ther ben many figures & plays founden that neuer were
 “don ne happed, But for an example to the peple, that
 “they may therby the better vse and follow vertue.”

He also uses the Chaucerian device:

“yf any thyng be said or wreton herin, that may greue or
 “dysplease any man, blame not me, but the foxe, for they
 “be his wordes and not myne.”

¹ See above, p. xc *et seq.*

² Some scholars incline to take this to mean *German*, which of course Caxton may have known well, since he spent more than a year in Cologne: but it may well mean *Dutch* in our modern sense.

The single copy of the second Edition in existence does not contain the lost leaves, but by a seventeenth-century hand the epilogue is supplied, presumably as Caxton wrote it. It is a complete revision, but loses nothing of its Chaucerian flavour, for, having described some of the pains of hell, he writes:—

“God grant vs his grace that we may not come therto for
“it is an evel place; it growleth me sore and myne heer
“standeth right up when I think thereon.”

August 12th 1481 is the date Caxton gives us for the printing of Tully “Of Old Age” and “Of Friendship,”¹ which are bound up in the same book with “The Declaration of Noblesse.” The first work was translated at the instance of Sir John Fastolfe: the other two by the Earl of Worcester.²

The prologue to *Reynard* had mentioned “the subtyl knowleche of such thyng as dayly been vsed and had in the counseylls of lordes and prelates goostly and worldly, and also emong marchants,” and the prologue to the *Senectute* states that the book is not for the benefit of simple men who had no “science ne connyng” but for “noble, wyse & grete lordes, gentylnen and marchauntes”: from which it is obvious that Caxton had no small idea of the dignity of merchandise in an age wherein even the noblest were turning to it for a source of income.

The latter prologue also shows some of the best phrases of English Caxton achieved: for example, “the noble philosopre and prynce of eloquence, Tullius, consul Romain, within the breste of whom Phylosophye natural and morall had chosen her domycill.”

At the close of the year³ Caxton translated the life of Godfrey of Bologne from the French, with the avowed purpose of encouraging Englishmen to join the new Crusade that had long been mooted “to recouer the Cyte of Jherusalem.” So pious and chivalrous an enterprise was dear to Caxton’s heart.

The earlier half of the year 1482⁴ was occupied with editing the *Policronicon*, an inordinately lengthy work to which Caxton added a whole Book, bringing the history down to the year

¹ “Bycause it is accordyng & requysyte to haue frendship loyned to olde eage.” Prol. to *Olde Age*, p. 43.

² See above, p. lxxvi.

³ Nov. 20.

⁴ Chronicle II. was also printed this year.

1460. Of the original work Caxton modernised the spelling generally and here and there added a sentence to anything he considered a little obscure. It was ready for printing by July 2nd.

The *Prohemye* contains Caxton's appreciation of the value of History:—

“For certayne it is a greet beneurte unto a man that
 “can be reformed by other and strange mennes hurtes and
 “scathes / and by the same to knowe / what is requysyte
 “and prouffitable for hys lyf . . . Therefore the counseylls
 “of auntyent & whyte heeryd men in whome olde age
 “hath engendryd wysedom been gretely prayseed of yonge
 “men / And yet hystories soo moche more excelle them /
 “as the dyturnyte or length of tyme includeth moo
 “ensamples of thynges & laudable actes than thage of one
 “man may suffysee to see.”

It should be an incentive to young men “and cause them more
 “valyantly to entre in Iopardyes of batayles for the
 “defence & tuicion (safety) of their country and publyke
 “wele”: it keeps alive the memory of noble and great
 ones of the past. The Epilogue to Book VII briefly describes
 his method and his sources.¹

For the year 1483 and thereafter² we have a still fuller
 record of Caxton's residence at Westminster, for the Prior's
 Rent Book³ contains some sixty entries of other payments made
 by him. He was in possession of at least four tenements other
 than those for which he had been paying the Sacrist since 1476.⁴

He appears to have paid thirteen shillings and fourpence
pro una domo, which the earlier entries show us was composed
 of one tenement at ten shillings per quarter and another at
 three and fourpence. Later he was paying three and fourpence
 per quarter for a further tenement (also called a 'house') and
 three and fourpence per annum for a 'camera' above the
 'way to the Almonry': this latter is clearly the one he rented
 originally from the Almoner⁵ and which is described in the first

¹ From which however he would have gleaned little as to purely English affairs.

² Unfortunately the bulk of the entries are not specifically dated.

³ W.A.M. 33289. See Appendix XXII.

⁴ See p. ciii and Appendix XXIII.

⁵ See p. cvi and Appendix XXIII.

year of the reign of Richard III (1483) as 'a loft above the Almonry gate.' Another tenement costing six shillings and eightpence, apparently per quarter, appears sporadically in the later entries and on three occasions he paid the quarterly dues as a lump sum of twenty-three and fourpence.¹

It is interesting to note that on one occasion the rent was paid not in money but "in Vino," as a note in the margin records. Had David Selley,² vintner, been then alive it would have been tempting to interpret this as a link between them, but this is of course impossible.

There seems to have been considerable latitude allowed in the matter of dates of payment, for they vary between December 29 and January 12, March 24 and April 12, June 30 and July 12, October 5 and November 3, while single payments were made on July 31, September 1 and September 27.

All the above entries are made in the hand of Essex, who was Prior at Westminster from 1482 until 1491, but the Book had actually been begun by previous Priors, although entries had been discontinued at the retirement of Prior Walshe (1441-1456). Now on the verso of the last leaf of Walshe's entries (leaf 13) there appear two other entries of payments by Caxton of sixty and a hundred shillings respectively.³ These entries are made in a hand larger than Walshe's and very similar to that of Essex, whose records carry on from 30 September 1482, but they are not absolutely identical with his, for Essex's hand is bolder and he consistently used a different type of letter 'x' in the middle of the name 'Caxton.'

The name of the Prior between 1474 and 1482 was Arundel and it appears probable that these entries are by his hand, although he made no consistent entries in the Prior's Book. What these large payments were for cannot be safely conjectured unless they were incurred in the instalment of the press in the precincts of the Abbey in 1476.

In 1483⁴ Caxton printed two more of Chaucer's works, the

¹ *i.e.* 13/4 + 3/4 + 6/8.

² See p. cvi.

³ See Appendix XXII.

⁴ Other books for this year are: "Pylgremage, Festial I, Confessio Amantis, Sox Epistolae, Chess II, Deathbed Prayers" and perhaps the "Ordre of Chyualry."

Book of Fame and the *Troilus*: the brief epilogue to the former contains a further critical estimate of the poet. Caxton, unlike most readers of his day, did not place Gower and Lidgate on the same level with the Master, but he says of Chaucer that

“in alle hys werkys he excellyth in myn oppynyon alle
 “other wryters in our Englyssh / For he wrytteth no
 “voyde wordes /¹ but all hys matter is ful of hye and
 “quycke sentence.”

Late in the year Caxton finished the greatest work of translation and printing he attempted, the *Golden Legend*. He tells us that he had at hand three versions of the *Legenda Aurea*, in Latin, French and English respectively, from which he compiled his own completer work: he however omitted a number of the grosser stories. The prologue he found ready to hand in De Vignay's French version and adopted it closely, but he added a further prologue of his own, wherein he tells that he was at one time “in maner halfe desperate to haue acomplissd it” and “was in purpose to haue left it.” The Earl of Arundel however encouraged him to complete it, promising “to take a resonable quantyte of them” and for the rest of his life “to grante . . . a yerely fee, that is to wete a bucke in sommer / & a doe in wynter,” with which he tells us he was “wel contente.”

At the very close of the year he dedicated to the City of London the *Caton*—“the beste booke for to be taught to yonge children in scole.” It was however not the English translation of Benet Burgh, “late hye chanon of saint stephens at Westmestre,” who had used the ‘ballad royal’ as his medium, but an independent translation made by the printer himself from a French version which had come into his hands.

To it he wrote a long prologue, lamenting the evident decay of the prosperity of London and the fact that the old families were all being ruined by the inadequacy of the then present generation. In other cities it was not so, says Caxton, and yet “fayrer ne wyser ne bet bespoken children in theyr yongthe ben nowher than ther ben in london.” So he took upon himself this translation for their edification.

¹ This could scarcely be said of Lydgate or Gower !

Another book of "special doctryne & teching by which al yong gentyl wymen may lerne to bihaue them self vertuously," the book "whiche the knyght of the toure made to the enseyngement and techyng of his daughters," followed in the first month of the next year (1484).

One may picture the delight with which Caxton would read the stories in this book to his own little daughter Elizabeth, who was then probably about thirteen years old.

To the edition of Aesop which was completed towards the end of March Caxton added a story by way of epilogue. It was of two priests, both "master of Artes," the one of which rose to a Deanery while the other did not so much as know the value of the tithes of his parish, since he took no heed of them, but cared only that for faithful service the reward should be heaven.

"The Curial" has but eight lines of foreword and the "Lyf of our Lady" an epilogue in verse, consisting of eight valedictory lines and two "balades" translated into Lidgate's metre from the Latin, which is cited in both cases. It is therefore only the *Prohemye* to the second edition of the *Canterbury Tales* that is of any biographical importance.

Caxton learned to his great distress that his former edition of the *Tales* made six years before had given a very corrupt text and so he set about printing the whole work anew, this time from a copy much cherished by the father of a young friend of his.

In the *Boethius* Caxton had written of Chaucer as "worshipful fader and first foundeur and embelisser of ornate eloquence in our English": here he gives full rein to his appreciation:—

"Inespecial to fore alle other we ought to gyue a
 "synguler laude unto that noble & grete philosopher
 "Gefferey Chaucer the which for his ornate wrytyng in
 "our tongue may wel haue the name of a laureate poete /
 "For to fore that he by hys labour embelysshyd / ornated /
 "and made faire our englisse / in thys Royame was had
 "rude speche & Incongrue / as yet it appiereth by olde
 "bookes / whyche at thys day ought not to haue place
 "ne be compared emong ne to hys beauteous volumes /
 "and aournate wrytynges / of whom he made many bokes
 "& treatyces of many a noble historye as well in metre as

“in ryme & prose / and them so craftyly made / that he
 “comprehended hys maters in short / quyck & hie
 “sentences / eschewyng prolyxyte / castyng away the
 “chaf of superfluyte / and shewyng the pyked grayn of
 “sentence / utteryd by crafty and sugred eloquence.”

Only two of the books printed in 1485 contain no original writing by the printer: they are the *Lyf of Wenefryde* and the popular romance, *Paris and Vyenne*.

The *History of Arthur* was finished by July 31st 1485 and the *Ordre of Chyualry* either in the same year or a little before: both deal with a subject near to Caxton's heart. In the prologue to *Arthur* Caxton enumerated the “nine worthies,” of whome was fyrst the noble Arthur, and goes on to tell how ‘many noble and dyuers gentylnen’ persuaded him that he, who had already printed the life of Godfrey, the least of the three Christian kings, must on no account fail to give Malory's work to the world.

A brief discussion follows as to the authenticity of King Arthur's life and adventures, of which Caxton was a faithful believer:

“Al these thynges considered ther can no resonable man
 “gaynsaye butt here was a kyng of thys lande named
 “Arthur”

who was

“fyrst of the three crysten men / and also he is more spoken
 “of beyonde the see, moo bookes made of his noble actes
 “than there be in englond, as well in duche, ytalyen,
 “spanyssh and grekyashe as to frensshe.”

But no man

“is accept for a prophete in his owne countreys.”

In the mention of the “dyuers gentylnen” Mr. Plomer sees a clue to the social status of Caxton at the time. This is his picture:—

“There is no doubt that by this time Caxton's printing
 “office had become the meeting place of the *literati*. Lords
 “and ladies from Court, the clergy of London, merchants
 “from the city, and book lovers of every class found their
 “way there, to buy books and talk over bookish matters
 “with the old printer.”

The view is perhaps a little onesided : Caxton must still have been the business man and the commander of men, and he was almost certainly a government official too.

It is in the epilogue to the *Ordre of Chyualry* however that Caxton rose to one of his greatest heights of eloquence, in a passage which is often cited as a remarkable specimen of fifteenth-century declamation :

“ O ye knyghtes of Englonde, where is the custome and
 “ usage of noble chyualry that vsed in the dayes / What
 “ do ye now / but go to the baynes & playe atte dyse ?
 “ And some not wel aduysed vse not honest and good rule
 “ ageyn alle ordre of knyghthode / leue this / leue it and
 “ rede the noble volumes of saynt graal ofancelot / of
 “ galaad / Ther shalle ye see manhode curtesys &
 “ gentylnesse / And loke in latter dayes of the noble
 “ actes syth the conquest Allas what doo ye / but
 “ slepe & take ease / and ar al disordred fro chyualry ? ”

This book he presented to Richard III, “ to thende /
 “ that he commande this book to be hadd & redde vnto the
 “ yong lordes knyghtes and gentylnen within this royaume /
 “ that the noble ordre of chyualry be hereafter bette vsed
 “ & honoured than hit hath ben in late dayes passed.”

In 1485 he also completed the trilogy, with the life of Charles the Great. The opening of the prologue is very obviously a translation of the author's own prologue, but less skilfully adapted than usual : it is continued by a brief apology for the “ rudeness ” of the translation, which was made

“ after the symple connyng that god hath lente to me,
 “ wherof I humbly & wyth al my herte thanke hym / &
 “ also am bounden to praye for my fader & moders soules /
 “ that in my youthe sette me to scole / by whyche by the
 “ suffraunce of god I gete my lyuyng, I hope truly.”

He translated the “ enuoye of thauctour ” and added a brief mention of William Daubeney, “ one of the tresorers of the Jewellys of the noble . . kyng . . Edward the fourth, on whos soule Ihesu have mercy.” It was Daubeney who had desired him to print the work.

One may conclude that in 1486 Caxton either temporarily broke down in health or that once more he was occupied to a very great extent with official matters, for the *Speculum I* is the

only book ascribable to that year. For the next year, the *Book of Good Manners* is the only one of five¹ which has any original matter. It refers to the death of Caxton's great friend, William Pratt, whom we have already considered.²

It was a group of friends, this time "merciers of London," not nobles, who inspired Caxton to print the *Royal Book* in 1488. The prologue to it is full of a sense of the transitoriness of the world, perhaps due to an increasing feebleness which was laying hold of the printer, for again this is the only book ascribable to that year.

Be that as it may, the year next following saw a revival of energy, for no less than eleven extant books³ appear to have been printed in 1489, although much of the work involved mere revision, such as might readily have been done by Caxton's assistants.

Two of these books were translated by royal command: one at the desire of Henry VII and the other at that of the Duchess of Somerset, the King's mother. So are we informed in the epilogues to the *Faytts of Arms* and the prologue to *Blanchardyn* respectively.

The prologue to the *Four Sonnes of Aymon* is not extant in Caxton's own print, but Copland reprinted the work in 1554 and there is little doubt that the prologue therein given is a reasonably faithful copy of Caxton's original introduction. He tells us that the book was translated from the French at the desire of "the ryght noble and vertus Erle John Erle of Oxeforde," for whom he had already printed a book concerning one of his predecessors, Earl Robert. This latter book is not extant.

For 1490 there is an entry in the Churchwardens' Account of St. Margaret's, Westminster, which runs as follows:—

"Item, atte buryeing of Maude Caxton for torches &
taperes iijs. iid."

This Maud Caxton may well have been William's wife: if so, as Blades wrote, "It will explain in a most interesting manner,

¹ The others were *Golden Legend* II, *Directorium* I, *Donatus Melior*, *Commemoracio*.

² See above, p. cx.

³ *Doctrinall*, *Faytts of Arms*, *Indulgences*, *Blanchardyn*, *Dictes* III, *Four Sonnes of Aymon*, *Gouvernayle of Helthe*, *Directorium* II, *Reynard* II, *Statutes*.

the reason why he in that year suspended printing the 'Fayts of Arms' until he had finished a new undertaking, 'The Arte and Crafte to Die Well.'"

It is in this year too that the last known entry in official documents directly concerning Caxton occurs. Among the Records of the Treasury, there exists a book of "Receipts and Payments" for the reign of Henry VII,¹ in which are recorded two payments² made to William Caxton "for thexpens of dyuers officers of the Kinges Receyt at Westminster." The second of the two adds the information that they were made "for dyuers appoyntments to be made for the See and otherwise." The two sums amount to 10s. 10d.—about £6 in modern money.

It is known that the Camera Prioris at the Abbey was at one time used for the Receipt and it may therefore have been therein that Caxton performed some kind of official duty. What exactly that duty may have been is difficult to conjecture, but from the wording of the entries one may suppose that it concerned arrangements for the going to sea or crossing to the Continent of certain of the King's officers, arrangements which entailed some little expense to Caxton, who was duly reimbursed by the Treasury.

Almost at the end of his career as a translator, in the Prologue to the *Eneydos* (1490), Caxton tells us a little about the problem which had all along been facing him—that of the choice of a suitable English medium. Just previously, he writes, "some gentylnen . . . blamed me sayeng that in my
"translacyons I had ouer curyous termes which coude not
"be vnderstonde of comyn peple / and desired me to vse
"olde & homely termes."

Again, John Esteney, Abbot of Westminster, had shown him some writings in "olde englysshe," which he desired him to modernise :

"Certaynly it was written," says Caxton, "in suche wyse
"that it was more lyke to dutche than englysshe. I
"coude not reduce ne brynge it to be understonden."

But his greatest difficulty had been to choose between the

¹ T.R.B. 124.

² ff. 80 & 92. See Appendix XXIV. These interesting entries were brought to my notice by my good friend, Mr. G. S. Humphreys, whose period of research partially overlapped my own.

varying dialectal words which prevailed in his day. Then follows the famous illustrative story of the merchant who asked for eggs at a wayside inn and was accused of speaking French by the hostess who knew them as "eyren."

In the face of these problems Caxton confessed himself "abashed," but he resolved to choose "the comyn termes that be dayli vsed" as his medium. This decision on the part of the introducer of printing influenced the English language to an obvious but incalculable extent. The *Art and Craft* was the only other new book issued in that year.¹

The end of Caxton's life came suddenly some time in the year 1491 and it came as he would have desired it to come—while he was engaged in active labour. When Wynken de Worde published the English version of the *Lyves of the Fathers* he added this colophon:—

"Thus endyth the most vertuouse hystorye of the deuoute and right renowned lyves of holy faders luyunge in deserte, worthy of remembraunce to all wel dysposed persones, which hath bē translated oute of Frenche into Englysshe by William Caxton of Westmynstre late deed and fynysed at the laste daye of hys lyff."

It is to be noted that pious works alone² issued from the press the year of his death, among which the *Fifteen Oes* (Prayers) only has a short epilogue.

The exact date of Caxton's death is unknown: two references only attest it; the one is the entry in the Parish Accounts of St. Margaret's, Westminster:—

1490-1492

"Item. atte Buryeing of William Caxton for

iiij torches

vij s. viij d.

Item for the belle atte same bureyng

vj d."

(the costs convey the importance of the funeral ceremony), and a note "in a very old hand" quoted by Ames as written in a copy of the *Fructus Temporum*:—

"Of your charitee pray for the soul of Mayster Wyllyam

"Caxton, that in his time was a man of moche ornate and

¹ 1490. The others were *Speculum II, Horae III & IV, Myrroure II.*

² 1491. *Festum Transfigurationis, Divers Ghostly Matters, Fifteen Oes, Four Sermons, Festial II, Ars Moriendi.*

“moche renommed wysdome and connyng, and decessed
“ful crystenly the yere of our Lord MCCCC LXXXXJ.”

There is only one point to add. Major K. N. Colville, in an article on Caxton published in “The Quarterly Review” for January 1927, passes in review all the branches of book-interest with which Caxton’s output dealt: Encyclopædias, education, true Classics (though few), morality and religion, allegory, chivalry, Romance, history and the Poets. “Only one important class of book,” he writes, “is not represented in Caxton’s list, Travel. But again Wynken de Worde in 1499 filled the gap by giving ‘Sir John Mandeville’ to the world.”

It is interesting therefore to know that this apparent gap would have been filled had Caxton lived a month or two longer. This is the note concerning Brit. Mus. Egerton MS. 1982:—

“On a leaf of paper pasted on the inside of the ancient
“cover of this MS. (Mandeville) and too friable and decayed
“to be separated from it and preserved, there was written—

‘Thys fayre Boke I haue fro the Abbey at Saint¹
Albons in thys yere of our lord M.CCCC. lxxxx:
the sixt daye of Aprylle.

Willyam Caxton.

Rd. Tottyl 1579. London.’”

But Death did not allow him to round off his work with this “fayre boke.”

¹ It has been supposed that a printing press was at work in the Abbey of St. Albans between 1479 and 1485, but there existed at Westminster one, Otuel Fulle or Fuller, “master of the scholars of the Almonry,” who lived at a house in the precincts known as ‘St. Albans.’ He it is who may have been the mysterious printer called by W. de W., “Sometyme scholemayster of St. Albans.” See Plomer, p. 86.

A second question arises as to whether this fact was known to John Bale in 1557, for with reference to William Caxton he has the obscure sentence: *Cuiusdam didascali ad Albani janum conatibus postea, obortis quidem, sed nondum finitis, se ad hec instimulatum esse primo, fatetur; qui morte preventus, in schedis ac pagellis aliquot imperfectum reliquerat opus.*

This can hardly refer (as it appears to do) to the whole of Caxton’s work, but is very significant in this particular connexion.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

CAXTON'S DAUGHTER¹

WHENEVER she were born, Caxton's daughter Elizabeth did not choose for her husband a man worthy to have been the son-in-law of so famous a father. The record of Gerard Crop, her husband, as far as the Early Chancery Proceedings reveal it is hardly to be admired. Scarcely was William Caxton buried ere his son-in-law set about worrying Sir Richard Warde, an executor, to pay him the sum of £80 "that the said William Cakkeston lying in his deth bed bequaythed in hys last "wyll" to him.

From this quotation concerning the legacy² it is perhaps not unreasonable to suggest that Caxton's will (for which constant and diligent search has everywhere been made during half a century) may never have been committed to paper, but was nuncupative.³ This variety of testament, resting on the spoken word before witnesses, was held to be legally valid until the time of Charles II.

To begin with Warde temporised, saying that he would pay the money to Crop if he brought two sufficient men to witness the act. Crop prevailed upon two men, Robert Stowell⁴ and

¹ See Appendices XXVII-XXX.

² From E.C.P. 128. 79. See Appendix XXVII.

³ See *Notes and Queries*, Ser. 10. vol. 6. p. 241, an article by Messrs. W. McB. and F. Marcham.

⁴ Robert Stowell was warden of St. Mary's Guild, Westminster, in 1491. His wife was named Johanna. They lived in the important house of "St. Albans" (after Fulle) and Robert owned many tenements in the Abbey, including one next door to Caxton's in the Almonry. W.A.M. 17898.

William Myltryp¹ to witness the settlement, but none was forthcoming, for Warde then declared "that he would not delyuer the said money onlesse he wer therto compelled by the spiritual lawe." Thereupon Gerard Crop sued him in the Archdiaconal Court of Westminster for the amount and was awarded the money.

Despite this judgment however, Warde said "opynly" that he "woold not yet delyuer the said money without commaundement of the kyng" and "to thentent that Crop shuld never haue hys said duty but utterly be dystried in pryson," he caused him to be arrested upon action of trespass and surety of the peace and cast him into Bread Street prison, where even his wife was not allowed to see him. Crop therefore made an appeal for a writ of *corpus cum causa* to the "most reverent fadre in god tharchebishop of Canterbury, chancellor of Englund."

It will be seen that the above reveals no less than four separate legal actions, but they did not mark the end of litigation. Things went from bad to worse and between 1493 and 1496 Elizabeth herself was sued before the Sheriffs of London for action of trespass and debt, and "detynd in pryson" without option of bail: on this account she appealed to the Sheriffs also for a writ of *corpus*, that her case might be brought before the "Kinges Court of his Chancery," there to be judged.

A distressing culmination was reached in 1496, when, variances having arisen between husband and wife, on May 20th Gerard Crop, merchant tailor, and Elizabeth, daughter of William Caxton, appeared before the Archdeacon of Westminster and the King's Chaplain in St. Stephen's Chapel. There they agreed to live apart, "except that the said Gerard shall mowe fynde the meanes to haue the loue & favour of the said Elizabeth" once again, and was never to vex, sue or trouble one another again "for any maner matier" under a penalty of £100.

When the deed to that effect was signed, Gerard Crop was to receive of the executors of William Caxton "twenty printed legends," valued at 13s. 4d. each (such as he also bequeathed

¹ Of Myltryp nothing further is known.

to St. Margaret's), and was then to give them a full acquittance of any further claim upon the estate.

Finally in 1497, at the suit of Robert Redknapp, mercer, the court of King's Bench ordered an inquiry into Crop's means, probably with a view to distraint for his having infringed the Statute "De Conspiratoribus."

COLARD MANSION

It has been shown that Colard Mansion reappears in the records of the Guild of St. John at Bruges for the year 1482-3. In the following year appears a highly curious entry:—

Folio 117, recto.

Itē Jēny die m^e colaert māseon wonēde was voor siin doot
scult viij s^e g.

Van Praet translates this as

Item, de Jenny, qui demeuroid avec colaert Manseon, pour
sa dette de mort, quatre escalins de gros.

If "Jenny" could be taken to refer to a man, then the translation would hinge upon the meaning of the word *voor* (Flem. *vóór*), whether it is to be read *for* or *before*, that is

Item, Jenny who used to live at Colard Mansion's house
before his death, owes . . .

or

for his death-duties . . . 4 s.g.

But for 1461-2 the records have this entry:—

Item ontfaen van Hannekin te colaert mansioens viij gr.

which Van Praet renders as

Item, reçu de Jeannette chez Colaert Mansion.

Now *Jenny* would be the natural anglicisation of the Flemish *Hannekin* and the French *Jeannette*, and it is therefore evident that "Jenny" is not a man at all.¹

This raises two problems: why does Mansion's servant appear in a Dutch record under an English name? (Even if Caxton and his wife were in the habit of calling her "Jenny,"

¹ But in the *R.G.P. Middleburg* the name *Hannekin* does on occasion clearly refer to a man, so perhaps it is Van Praet's error. This does not however dispose of the original entry.

it is remarkable that what is almost a nickname should have usurped the place of her native name.) And to the death of whom else than Mansion can the whole entry refer?

That Colard Mansion did not die at this time is almost certain, for in the records of the Chapter of the Church of St. Donatius at Bruges for September 9th, 1484, appears an entry ordering that, *an Colardus Mansion rediturum sit vel non*, the "little chamber" he rented *in ambitu* should be let to another. In the margin is written *Colardus Mansion profugit*: this leaves little doubt that Mansion had not died, but had fled bankrupt from the town. This and other subsequent documents concerning him may be referred to in L'abbé Carton's article on "Colard Mansion et les imprimeurs Brugeois du XVeme. siècle."

APPENDIX

I

Public Record Office. Close Roll, 32 Henry VI, mem. 26.

De scripta allocatione Caxton Omnibus Christi fidelibus ad quos presens scriptum peruenerit: Willielmus Caxton ciuis et mercerus civitatis londonensis salutem in domino sempiternam.

William Caxton, citizen and mercer of London, gives into the hands of Robert Cosyn and John Rede all his goods both in England and abroad.

Nou(er)itis me prefatum Willielmum dedisse concessisse et hoc presenti scripto meo confirmasse Roberto Cosyn ciui et mercero civitatis predictae et Johanni Rede de eadem civitate omnia et singula bona mea mercimonia res et catalla mobilia ac immobilia tam viua quam mortua presentia et futura cuiuscumque generis condicionis seu speciei fu(er)int ubicumque extit(er)int et in quibuscumque manibus possessione locis aut gubernacione invenire poterint tam infra regnum Anglie quam alibi in partibus transmarinis ubique. et etiam omnia et singula debita denaria pecuniarum summas quantitates valores ac parcelas michi per quascumque personas in regno ac partibus predictis qualitercumque spectantia seu detentia habenda tenenda possidenda et perspicienda omnia et singula supradicta bona mercimonia res catalla debita denaria pecuniarum quantitates valores ac parcelas ut predictum est prefatis Roberto et Johanno executoribus ac assignis eorum libere quieto integro bono et pacifico imperpetuo ad inde faciendam et disponendam suam propriam voluntatem absque aliqua condicione reclamacione perturbacione impetitione impedimento graimine vel calumpnia cuiuscumque et absque aliquo compote Raciocinio vel responso inde vel alicuius inde parcello michi aut alicui alio quouismodo facienda seu reddenda infuturum.

Ita quod nec ego predictus Willielmus nec aliquis alius per me pro me aut nomine meo aliquod ius clameum titulum proprietatem vel demanda de aut in supradictis bonis mercimoniis rebus catallis debitis pecuniarum summis denariis quantitibus valoribus ac parcelis nec in aliqua eorundem parcella decet exigere reclamare vindicare siue ullo modo de-

He relinquishes all claim to the same.

cxxxiii

mandare potero aut poterit debeat vel debet infuturum sed ab omni accione iuris clamei tuli proprietatis ac demandae inde totaliter sim et sit exclusi imperpetuo per presentes.

To which he
put his seal
11 December
1453.

In cuius rei testimonium hoc presenti scripto meo sigillum meum apposui. Datum undecimo die mensis Decembris Anno domini millesimo CCCC quinquagesimo tertio et anno regni Regis Henrici sexti tricesimo secundo.

Witnessed at
West-
minster.

Et memorandum quod predictus Willielmus venit in Cancellario Regis apud Westmonasterium duodecimo die Decembris anno presenti et recognouit scriptum predictum et omnia contenta in eodem in forma predicta.

II

Middelburg: Register Ordonnantie voor de vleeshourers. 1430 f. 174 v.

Vonnis inzake geschil over vracht. 1462, Juli 16.

Peter
Willems
zone,
plaintiff,
appeared in
person
against
William
Caxton
who was
appearing
on his own
behalf and
with
authority to
represent
other
Englishmen.
P. W.
demanded
payment for
transport of
English
merchandise
destined for
London.

Den XVI^{ten} dach in Julio anno XIII^o LXII quamen ende compareerden ter vierschare van Middelborch in hueren persone Pieter Willems zone, scippere, poorter in Middelborch, heesschere over een zyde, ende Willem Caxston, copman ende geboren uut den ryke van Ingelant, voor himzelven ende als macht hibbende van meer andere coopmannen uut Ingelant, zyne medegesellen, also hy seyde, over andere, aldair die voirnoemde P. Willems zone den voirnoemden Willem in de name alsboven dede heysschen zekere somme van penningen als van vrachte van zekere goederen ende coopmanscepen, den voirsr. Willem ende andere zynen medegesellen toebehorende, ende zy in zijn scip geladen hadden ende bevracht omme te voeren tot Lonnen in Ingeland, zeggende dat hy sculdich ware daerof zyne vracht thebben van denzelven Willem, waerop die voirsr. Willem verweerer, dede zeggen ende voortsetten, hoe dat waer was, dat hy ende andere zyne medegesellen huere goeden gedaen en geladen hadden int scip van den voirnoemden Pieter, die dat genomen ende geloofd hadde te voeren tot Lonnen in Ingelant, twelke by niet gedaen en hadde, want by quader avontneren zeilde zijn voirsr. scip onder wege op een sant, daer(t) brack ende schuerde, aldaer een groot deel van hueren goede verloren bleef ende verdarf, ende tselve, dat zy beergen mochten of gebercht wart, stont himlieden tot zonderlinge grote kosten; aldus hadden zijt quaet ende cost genouch gehadt, al graven zy geen gelt toe.

W. C.
admitted
chartering
the vessel,

but it was
wrecked on
a sandbank
and most of
the cargo
was lost:
what of it
was saved
had already
cost them
dear, with-
out paying
P. W. as
well.

Waerop die voirscr. heesschere dede zeggen, dat zijn verlies him groot genouch was, met vele meer anderen woorden, die van beyden zyden daertoe geseit ende voortgeset waren. Waerop die buerchmeistren ende scepenen, woorden ende wederwoorden gehoort ende ryphen raed daerop gehadt habbende, ter maninge van den bailliu met vonnessen ende over recht gewijst hebben, dat die voirscr. heesschere betaelt wesen soude van den voirscr. verweerers als van den goede, dat zyne vaert gedaen hadde, behonden dies, dat die costen, die de cooplyden gedaen hadden om tgoet te beergen, te wetene van uuyt svoirscr. heesschers schepe in anderen scepen over te slane of up wagenen te laden, denzelven cooplyden ofslach wesen sal van der voirscr. vracht.

The burger-masters, having considered the matter, decided that the plaintiff should be paid for transport with the costs of salvage and re-transport deducted therefrom.

Testes et scabini . . .

III

Kaspar Burman, *Utrechtsche Jaarboeken*, deel 2.

1464. Ter bevordering van de koopmanschap in deze Stadt heeft de Raadt aan eenen Willem Captorn en andere Engelsche kooplieden, toegelaten binnen de Stadt te komen met hunne koopmanswaaren, bestaande in lakenen, en hen vry geleyde vergund voor een jaar.

(In order to promote trade in this city, the Council has permitted one, William Captorn,¹ and other English traders to come to this city with their goods, consisting of sheets, and has given them free conduct for one year.)

IV

Bijdragen voor een Oorkondenboek van het sticht Utrecht. 906.

1466 (October 31) op Alreheilyghen avont.

De stad Utrecht geeft vrijgelerde gedurende een jar aan Willem Caxtom, gouverneur, en aan de kooplieden van de Engelsche natie voor hunne personen en goederen, en maakt verschillende bepalingen over hun verblijf en verkeer te Utrecht.

Inv. No. 33, folio 27 v.

(The town of Utrecht grants its freedom . . . to William Caxtom . . . and the English Nation . . . and makes divers

¹ Burman may easily have mistaken a handwritten *x* for *p*.

regulations for their activities during their residence at Utrecht.)

V

Kaspar Burman, *Utrechtsche Jaarboeken*, deel 2.

Free access is granted to the English and others who trade with them, and further privileges.

We, of Utrecht, grant free safe-conduct to the esteemed W. C., the traders, their relations, property, and goods.

All other traders who do or shall trade with them are given free access to the town.

Lasting one year.

Foreign traders may be rejected if they wrong the English in any way or defy the authorities of Utrecht.

1466. De koophandel in de Stadt Utrecht door toedoen der Engelsche kooplieden merkelyk toenemende, heeft de Regeering niet alleen hun vrygeley verlengt voor een jaar; maar zelfs aan alle, die met hen handel dreven, den toegang tot de Stadt open gestelt, en noch andere voordeelen aan de Engelsche handelaars toegestaan, welke vervat zyn in dezen brieff:

‘Wy Borgermeesteren, Scepenen, Raide ende ghemeyne Oudermannen van den ouden Raide, ende van den nywen der Stadt van Utrecht, maken kondt allen luden, dat wy mit rypen beraide eendrachtich, om nutschap, oerber ende profyt onser Stadt, borgers ende ondersaten, ende vordernisse der ghemeyne comanscap, een vry, vast, zeker gheleyde ghegont ende ghegeven hebben, gonnen ende gheven mit dezen onse brieve, den eersame, wyze Willem Captorn Governoer, ende den coepluden van der nacyen van Engelant, mit hoeren liven, gueden ende comanscappen binnen onse Stadt ende Stat vryheyde veylich te mogen comen, ende vry vercopen ende copen, leggen, blyven ende weer van heen gaen, mit hoeren lyven, gueden ende comanscappen, alzoec dicke, alst hem ghelieven sal. Ende oick allen anderen coepluden, die met den voerscreve coepluden Van Engelant comanscap plegen te doen, ende hyr na doen zellen, alhyr mit hoeren lyven, gueden ende comanscappen te moigen comen, wezen ende blyven, ende van heen scheyden, welck gheleyde nu rechtevoert op huden datum des ons briefs ingaen zel, ende gaet in, duerende een jaar langc naistcomende, ende den lesten dach al, wtgenomen die ons gnedichs Heren van Utrecht, of onse Stat, vyande, of ballinghe, of voervluchtich zyn, of die van koeren of van broicken wt onser Stadt zyn.

“Item en zelmen ghenen van den zelven coepluden, noch “hoere guede, noch comanscappen, beletten noch arrestieren “om enighen roef ofte scade, die voer dezer tyt ghedaen heeft “gheweest, of hyr na vallen moigen, den tyt des voerscreven “gheleyts duerende, aen enyghen wt den Ghestichte van “Utrecht, of anders by enyghen rovers, of lueden van oerloghe “van Engelant.”

“Item zellen die voerscreve coeplude moigen vergaderen
 “alzoec dicke, alst hem ghelieven sal, ende rait houden, ordi-
 “nancyen ende Statuten maken op alle coeplude van Engelant,
 “ende op hoere gueden, ende alzulke als rebellen, ende niet
 “onderdanich en zyn, corrigieren by hoeren Oversten, allen
 “twysten, geschelen ende questyen tueschen hem vallende
 “determineren ende eynden, behoudeliken ons zulke zaken, als
 “gaen aen lyff ende lytt.¹

The English
 may
 assemble in
 any number
 where they
 please to
 make rules
 for their
 own
 governance
 and their
 superiors
 may deal
 with all
 cases except
 those
 concerning
 life and
 limb.

“Item zellen die zelve coepluden van Engelant te werke
 “moigen stellen haaren pynnes ende arbeyders, om hoere
 “pachten op te slaen, tontbynden ende weder te maken, ende
 “oick hoere ployers van bynnen laken om hoeren lynrewaet te
 “vouwen, zonder enich letzel of verbot contrary van ons.

Stalls may
 be set up by
 them in
 their own
 way without
 hindrance.
 All foreign
 traders must
 swear to
 their
 honesty
 before they
 trade with
 the English.

“Item en zellen ghene Makelaers mit hem luden te doen
 “hebben anders, dan gheordyniert ende ghedeputiert zellen
 “werden by den Oversten ende gedeputierden van den coe-
 “pluden van Engelant, ende die zellen eenen eedt doen ende
 “zweren guet ende ghetrouwe te zyn tusschen coepman ende
 “coepman.

“Item zellen die voerscreve coeplude van Engelant van elken
 “laken, dat zy bynnen onser Stadt vercopen, der zelve onser
 “Stadt te zyfe gheven enen oert van enen stuver. Ende die
 “tlaken van hem copen zellen oick gheven van elken laken te
 “zyfe enen oert van enen stuver.

One piece of
 money shall
 be paid as
 tax by both
 buyer and
 seller of
 every shect
 sold.

“Ende want wy Borgermeisteren, Scepenen, Raide ende
 “ghemeyne Oudermannen voerscreve, alle punten voerscreve,
 “ende elk bysonder, den voerscreven Governoer ende coe-
 “pluden volcomelick houden, ende ghehouden hebben willen
 “zonder argelist, zoe hebben wy des toerkonde onser Stadt
 “seghel aln desen brief aven hanghen. Gegeren int jaer ons
 “Heren MCCCCLXVI op alre heilyghen avont.”

Thus we
 hold the
 Governor
 and the
 traders
 without
 malice and
 have
 decided
 upon all the
 above
 privileges.

1467. Het vry geley voor de Engelsche Kooplieden is weer op
 den zelve voet als in het voorige jaar, voor een jaar verlengt.

Renewed for
 a further
 year.

VI

Archives of Bruges.

Register entitled “present Wyn beghinnende den anderen
 dach van Septembre, MCCCCLXVIII.”

Not paginated.

August 1469.

“Sondach XIII Willem Caxtoen in Ypre te vj gr. iiij K.”

¹ Dat is lidt.

VII

Middelburg : E.G.P. Uttreksels uit de kwartiermeestersrekening.

1469, January 1—December 31.

Item, waren Reymer Willems zone ende Jan Jans zone Moyaert gesonden tot Brugge an Willem Caxstoen, meester van der Inghelscher nacie, ende waeren uuyt elcx 5 dagen, tot 4 sc. gr. sdaechs 2℥ gr.

Item, was Boudin Jans zone, der stede bode, gesonden tAntwerpen by Willem Castoen, meester van der Inghelscher nacie, met brieven hem te presenteren ende was uuyt 3 dagen, tot 16 gr. sdaechs, facit tzamne. 4 sc. gr.

(R. Willems zone and J. Jans zone were sent to Bruges to W. Caxton, master of the English nation, and they were absent for 5 days each, at 4 sch. gr. per day.

B. Jans zone, messenger of the town, was sent to Antwerp to W. Caxton . . . with letters to be presented to him, and he was away for 3 days, at 16 groyts daily, making together 4 sc. gr.)

VIII

Journal of the City of London, vol. 7, f. 186 verso.

January 28, 1469.

Ista die lecta fuit una littera per Willielmum Caxton mercatorem, pro mercatoribus de Hansa Alemannie scripta et directa maiori et aldermannis etc. . . .

Et quia non fuit plena curia conclusum est quod post nonam premunirentur omnes aldermanni essendo ad ecclesiam sancti Thome de Acon pro eadem littera.

IX

Middelburg : Kwartiermeestersrekening.

1470, January 1—December 31.

Item, gesceynt Willem Caxstoen, meester van der Inghelsche nacie, twee poirtkannan Rijnsch wijns, tot 6gr. tstoop, ende een poirtkanne Gasscoyngen, tot 4gr. stoop, facit. 2 s. gr.

(Given to William Caxstoen, master of the English Nation, two quarts of Rhenish wine, at 6 groyts the stoup, and one quart of Gascon wine, at 4 groyts the stoup, together 2s. 8 gr.)

X

Archives of Cologne

Register of aliens at Cologne.

Four entries :

- 1471 July 17 Wilh. Caxton uyss Engelant ad mensem cum
resignatione iij dierum.
- Aug. 9 Wilhem Kaxston vsque nativitatis Christi cum
resignatione viij dierum.
- Dec. 11 Wilhelm Kaxsum uyss Engelant usque Johannis
Baptiste ut supra cum resignatione 8 dierum.
- 1472 June 19 Wilhelm Kaxton uyss Engelant continuatum ut
supra ad medium annum cum resignatione viij
dierum.

XI

Public Record Office : Patent Roll : 12 Edward IV, Part I ; mem. 18.

REX omnibus ballivis et fidelibus suis ad quos etc.

Salutem.

To all
subjects.

Sciatis quod certis consideracionibus nos specialiter moven-
tibus de gratia nostra speciale ac ex certa scientia et mero motu
nostris pardonavimus, remissimus et relaxavimus, ac per pre-
sentes pardonamus, remittimus et relaximus, Willielmo Caxton
de civitate nostra London, mercier, seu quocunque alio
nomina censeatur, omnimoda prodiciones, murdra, raptus
mulierum, insurrectiones, rebelliones, conspiraciones, confede-
raciones, riotas, routas, conventicula illicita, insediaciones,
falsas allegansias, felonias, transgressiones, offensas, mis-
prisiones, extorciones, concelamenta et cogniciones eorundem,
forisfacturas, contemptus, impeticiones, cambipartias, manu-
tenencias, imbraciaras, ignorancias et alia malefacta quecunque
per ipsum Willielmum ante quartum diem Marci ultimo præ-
teritum qualitercunque facta sive perpetrata quamquam idem
Willielmo indictatus, appellatus, impetitus, retetatus, attinctus
vel adiudicatus existit aut indictari, appellari, impetiri, retetari
vel adiudicari contingerit in futuro ;

Be it known
that we
pardon
William
Caxton
of London,
mercier, of
all manner
of crimes

necnon sectam pacis nostrae que ad nos versus ipsum
Willielmum pertinet seu pertinere poterit occasione premis-
sarum vel alicuius eorundem, ac etiam utlegaria si quae in
ipsum Willielmum hiis occasionibus seu earum aliqua fuerint
promulgata, nec non forisfacturam quorumcunque terrarum et

committed by him before the 4th of March last, and free him from all actions arising therefrom.

tenementorum ac bonorum et cattalorum suorum nobis occasionibus predictis seu earum aliqua ante quartum diem Marci forisfacta sive deperdita et firmam pacem nostram ei inde concedimus. Ita tamen quod stet recto in curia nostra si quis versus eum loqui voluerit de premissis vel aliquo premissorum, aliquo statuto actu sive ordinacione inde incontrarium facta, edita sive ordinata aut aliqua re causa vel materia quacunque non obstantibus.

Westminster, March 8, 1472.

XII

[This is representative of more than half-a-dozen similar commissions for earlier dates in which Caxton's name appears. It may also serve to represent some four other records among the Diplomatic Documents which are almost identically worded. See *Treaty Roll*, 9 Ed. IV, mm. 12, 13, 17, 18; 13 Ed. IV; *C.W.I.* 826. 2837; *Dip. Doc.* 1073 (7, 8), 544-554.]

Public Record Office. *Treaty Roll*: 14 Edward IV, m. 6.

De tractando et concludendo cum Duce Burgundie.

Rex Omnibus ad quod etc.

Salutem.

The king with the approval of his cousin, the Duke of Burgundy, appoints

Cum amicitias ligas atque confederaciones inter nos et illustrissimum potentissimumque Principem fratrem atque Consanguineum nostrum carissimum Carolum eadem gracia Burgundie ducem siue christianorum felicitatis renouando perpetue que federis pacis firmando atque unum vsurpantium penitus extirpandarum gracia hactenus initas et percussas vti crebro repetamus

for the discussion of commercial intercourse and exchange value of money

Eas eo sanctius atque perhennius et firmari et stabiliri vehementer arbitramur quo debitus pecuniarum intercursus ceteraque monetarum estimacio atque mercandisarum ceteraque rerum commerciarum de commune nostrorum suorumque subditorum bonorum equa laute earum virtute mutua duci videantur hinc est quod nos de fidelitatibus et prouidis circumspexionibus dilectorum et fidelium nostrorum magistri Johannis morton legum Doctoris Custodis Rotulorum et recordarum Cancellarie nostri Thome montgomery Dapiscide nostri et militis pro corpore nostro Johannis Scotte militis marestalli ville nostre Calesie et magistri Willielmi Hatclyff Secretarii nostri consiliorum nostrorum necnon Willielmi Roos vitellarii dicte ville nostre Calesie Ricardi Tykell Willielmi Caxton

John Morton,

Thomas Montgomery, John Scott, William Hatcliff, William Roos,

mercatoris et Christofori Eliott plenarie confidentes constituimus deputavimus et ordinavimus ipsos nostros veros et indubitatos ambassiatores commissarios procuratores et deputatos speciales dantes et concedentes eis omnibus septem sex quinque quatuor tribus et duobus eorum quorum aliquem prefatorem Johannis morton Johannis Scotte et Willielmi Hatclyff vnum esse volumus plenam potestatem auctoritatem ac mandatum generale et speciale ad tractandum communicandum appunctuandum et concludendum pro nobis et nomine nostro cum serenissimo Principe carissimo fratre nostro Carolo duce Burgundie antedicto

Richard Tickel, and William Caxton as his fully accredited ambassadors

aut eius ambassiatoribus, Procuratoribus Nunciis seu deputatis sufficientem potestatem et auctoritatem ab ipso fratre nostro habendibus tam de et supra diuersitate vera estimacione debito pretio atque certo valore pecuniarum et monetarum nostrarum ipsius que fratris nostri antedicti necnon ceterum quorumcumque infra partes et dominia dicti fratris nostri cursum in presenciarum habentium seu amodo cursum habere volentium vno cum vtili mutuo intercurso inter nostros ipsius que subditos earundem in certis patriis et dominiis nostris atque suis et alibi ipsas que pecunias siue monetas monetatis ac quamlicet peciam earundem ad ceteram valorem iuxta qualitatem ac afferenciam earundem estimandi limitandi et statuendi quam de et super quadam Stapula pro lanis partium borealium dicti regni nostri Anglie stapule Calesie minime pertinentibus locanda et deponenda ordinanda in aliquo loco siue locis ipsius fratris nostri dicationis et obediencie assignandum et deputandum siue assignando et deputando necnon ad ipsius Stapule mercatorum que eiusdem bonum ac vtilitatem libertates immunitates exemptiones et privilegia iuxta sua discreciones maxime conueniencia oportuna et necessaria ab eodem fratre nostro impetandum et optinendum promissa que omnia et singula firmandum appunctuandum ac concludendum sub modo forma condicionibus penis ascripcionibus promissionibus ac obligacionibus

to discuss the above,

and matters concerning the staple of Calais,

Ac etiam si necesse fu(er)it ad assignandum deputandum et capiendum vnam aliam dietam in tali loco aut talibus locis et inibi ad coitandum tractandum appunctuandum ac finaliter de et super omnibus et singulis promissis concludendum prout eis septem sex quinque quatuor tribus et duobus eorum quorum ali-

in such place or places as shall seem expedient.

quem prefati Johanuis morton Johannis scotte et willielmi Hatclyff vnum esse volumus expediens aut oportunum visum fu(er)it

necnon de et super huiusmodi appunctuatis et conclusis ceterisque omnibus et singulis premissis qualitercunque contententibusque cum prefato fratri nostro aut eius Ambassiatoribus procuratoribus Nunciis seu deputatis suis predictis appunctuata concordata ac conclusa fu(er)int litteras validas et efficaces pro parte nostra tradendi ac liberandi litterasque alias consimiles effectis et vigoris ex altera parte petendi ac recipiendi et generaliter omnia premissa ac premissorum singula qualitercumque continencia facienda exitenda ac expedienda

Ita et eodem modo sicut nos ipsi faciemus et facere possemus si in propria persona interessemus Etiam si talia sint que mandatum de se magis exigant speciale Promittentes bona fide ac in vestro regio omnia et singula que per prefatos Johannem morton Thomam montgomery Johannem Scotte Willielmum Hatclyff Willielmum Roos Ricardum Tykell Willielmum Caxton et Cristoforum Elliott septem sex quinque quatuor tres aut duos eorum quorum aliquem prefatorum Johannis morton Johannis Scottę et Willielmi hatclyff vnum esse volumus appunctuata premissa concordata conclusa fu(er)int in hac parte nos rata grata et firma h(ab)iturus ac obseruatus et approbatorias in forma debita ac autentica prout opus fu(er)it datum.

In cuius etc.

Teste Regis apud Westmonasterium primo die Decembris—
per breue de privato sigillo et datum etc.

XIII

Hanserecense, Band 7.

Brügge, 1474. Aug. 10.

Before W.
Caxton and
B. Bercholf
as witnesses,

in the
Carmelite
Refectory,
A. Leigh
presented
documents
of ratifica-

Lucas de Via, Kleriker der Diöcese Tournai, päpstlicher und kaiserlicher Notar, bezeugt, dass 1474 Aug. 10. in seiner und der dazu gerufenen Zeugen, Mag. Wilhelm Carston (Anglico) und Bertrand Bercholf (Almanno) Gegenwart im Refektorium des Karmeliterklosters zu Brügge, Alexander Liegh, Kaplan des Kg. Eduard von England, und Johann Duerkoop, unacum assistencia—Jo. van der Lucht, oldermanni moderni, ac magistrorum Goswini de Cosveldia et Gerardi Bruns ihre unten

inserirten Vollmachten vorwiesen und erklärten, dass sie in Erfüllung, ut dicebant, eines Artikels des utrechter Vertrages gegenseitig eine Anzahl von Urkunden erhalten (videlicet magister Alexander a Johanne Durkoop et suis consociis supradictis duas patentes et auctenticas ratificationis approbationis et confirmacionis litteras, unam videlicet ad modum libri sive libelli plura continentem folia in pergameno, magno sigillo civitatis Lubicensis glauca cero impresso cordulis sericis rubei et albi coloris, et aliam simili sigillo duplici cauda pergameni impendente sigillatas, et antedictus Jo. Duerkop una cum suis sociis a prefato magistro Alexandri tres patentes litteras sigillo magno dicti domini regis Anglie cera glauca impresso duplicibus caudis pergamenis impendente sigillatas) und dieselben nach Verlesung und Vergleichung in eine Holzkapsel gethan hätten, um sie dem Prior des Karmeliterklosters, Cornelius de Wise, doctor in sacra theologia, zur Aufbewahrung zu geben: diese Uebergabe wurde hierauf vollzogen und Cornelius versprach, die Urkunden nur auf den einmüthigen Wunsch beider Parteien wieder herauszugeben.

tion to J
Duerkoop,

but the
sealing was
incorrect

and the
documents
were
deposited
with the
Prior,

Ferner erklärten beide Parteien, dass sie an den gegenseitigen Urkunden Anstoss nehmen und zwar Liegh, weil die eine der ihm übergebenen Urkunden per modum libri sive libelli confecta esset, quod eidem magistro Alexandro videbatur minus conforme usui et consuetudini regni Anglie, et alia littera sigillo duplici cauda pergameni et non cordulis sericis impendente sigillata foret; Duerkop und die Semen dagegen, weil die drei Urkunden des Kg. magno sigillo duplicis caudis pergameni et non filis sericis impendente sigillate, quodque in altera earundem litterarum certe dictiones extra lineas rectas addita scripta et non approbate fuissent. Um allen etwas hieraus sich ergebenden Streitigkeiten vorzubeugen, einigten sich beide Theile (amicabiliter) dahin, dass Liegh die Ausfertigung von drei gleichlautenden königlichen Urkunden unter Einfügung der ausserhalb der hinein stehende Worte und Anhängung der Siegel an Seidenschnüren, bewirken soll und ebenso Duerkop zwei neue gleichlautende aber in carta pergameni et non per modum libri geschriebene Ausfertigungen, an welchen die Siegel gleichfalls an Seidenschnüren anhängen sollen, von Lübeck zu erwirken hat; diese neuer Ausfertigungen sollen bis zum 1 Nov. an den Prior behufs Ausantwortung an die

(while new
ones were
being
prepared)

to be
produced
only with
the consent
of both

parties,
until
November
1.

betreffenden Parteien gesandt und der utrechter Vertrag hierdurch in keiner Weise beeinträchtigt werden.

XIV

Archives of the Hague.

Uitreksel uit de rentmeestersrekenningen van Nord
Holland. I. No. 108. 1475.

Ghijsbert van
der Mye

fol. 151 v.

Ghijsbrecht van der Mye, secretaris Mijns voirsr.
genadigen heeren reysde by bevele ende ordinantie

van mynen heere den president ende raide van Hollant uuyter Hage den XXIII^{en} dach van April anno LXXV mit meester Willem Kaxton, commissaris ende facteur van den coninc van Engelant, op 't stuck van sekere scepen binnen den lande van Hollant te doen bereyden, om denselven coninc mit zijre wapeninge als hy in meninge waere uuyt Engelant over te comen te halen ende te voeren an den gerechten van den Steden van Delf, Rotterdam, Goude, Dordrecht ende van danen voirt an den gerechten van Ziericxoe, Goes, Remmer, Zivale, Middelburch, Vynningen ende van Vlissingen, mit sekere brieve van credencie denselven steden vanwegen mijns voirsr. genadigen heeren te kennen te geven, hoe dat dieselve mijn genadigen heeren mit zyne opene brieve van mandementen den voirsr. president ende raide gescreven ende geadverteert hadde, dat al wait so, dat zyne genadige denselven steden zeer scarpelic gescreven ende bevolen hadde, dat zy den voirsr. coninc van Engelant zynen schonen broeder ende den voirsr. meester Willem Kaxton, zynen facteur, in zynen name willigen sonden alle die scepen, die zy elc in den hoeren hadden ende him nut ende bequaem dochten tot des voirsr. coninc overcomen om denselven te dienen tot zynen redelicken costen, dat nochtans die scipperen van denselven scepen, die by de voirsr. meester Willem dairtoe gecoren waeren, soevele fuyten ende uuytwegen sochten ende soevele onbehoirlicke voirwairde ende loon van him hebben woude, dat mits dien dieselve Kacxton tot des coninck behoef an geen scepen gecomen en coude denselven dairop te adverteeren, dat zy die scipperen van den scepen, die by den voirscreven Kaxton dairtoe gecoren waeren also willigen ende bedwingen wouden mit alle wege van bedwange, dat zy den voirsr. coninck tot zynen redelicken coste optie tijt dienen souden in sulcker voegen, dat des voirsr.

accompanied
William
Kaxton

for the
purpose of
fitting out
ships to
fetch the
king from
England,
and escorted
Kaxton to
certain
towns
with letters
to the
authorities
commanding

ships to be
placed

at Caxton's
disposal

(but the
sailors
chosen for
service made
evasions and
excuses so
that Caxton
could not
get any
ships),
and ordering
that all
sailors and
ships should
be forced by
every means
so that

the king's
crossing

coninx overcomste by hoire negligencie niet getardeert en worde, om welke sake wille die voirsr. Ghijsbrecht geaffirmeert heeft gevaceert ende uuytgeweest te hebben in vaeren, merren ende keren den tijt van drie ende dartich dagen. Also hy die scipperen van de voirsr. scepen tot des voirsr. coninck dienste van de overvoeren zeer onwillich waeren ende dieselve scipperen oie niet uuytvaeren en wouden, sonder eerst van een maent te voeren betaelt te weesen dair die voirsr. Ghijsbrecht om vertoeven most ende by die voirsr. betalinge weesen elckes dages tot eene vranck van XXXII groit, die him by den voirsr. rade toetgetaxeert zijn nader ordinancie dairop gemaict alsoe by geen wedden en heeft belopende ter somme van vier pont acht scellinge groten, alst blijft by certificatie van den voirsr. president ende rade in date XXVI dagen in Meye anno XIIIILXXV onderthauteicken van meister Jan Boullin, greffier, inhoudende quytancie hierover gegeven vid. XXVI £ VIII sc.

should not be delayed.

They travelled 33 days

and the reluctant sailors had demanded a month's pay in advance;

so that Ghisbert had incurred expenses besides his own daily allowance,

and receipt was given for £28 8s.

XV

Municipal Accounts of Gouda, South Holland.

1475 No month specified.

Willem Kaxton, factor van den Coninck van Ingelant, een Maelyt, coste 8s. gr.

Gescenct Willem Kaxton, factor van den coninck, mit hem Gysbertus van der Mye ende noch een secretarius, om onse scepen mit¹ te reyden, ende van 4 brieven die autentvck² waren, om alle onse gemeen scepen in Zelant in Vlaenderen vri te laten varen, van een maelyt ende ander costen tsamen

18s. 8d. gr.

(W. Caxton, agent for the King of England, a dinner costs eight shillings gross.

Given W. Caxton, agent of the king, joined with him Gysbertus van der Mye and a secretary, to fit out our ships, and for 4 letters which were authentic, for allowing all our common ships in Zeland in Flanders to navigate freely, for a dinner and other expenses, eighteen shillings and eightpence gross.)

¹ sic. Probably for *uit*: uit reyden—fit out.

² Probably for *autentyck*.

XVI

Hanserecesse, Band 7.

1475, April 20.

To the
honourable
aldermen of
the Hanse
at Bruges.

Friends, I
have long
attended to
our affairs in
England

and am
convinced
that within
a fortnight
things must
be settled.

The king has
appointed
gentlemen
to instruct
us on all
points
agreed upon
at Utrecht.
Mr. Hatcliff
told us that
the letters
have been
rewritten
and will be
sent to W.
Caxton at
Bruges:

likewise an
agreement
is desired
with W. C.
such as the
Cologne
merchants
now enjoy.

Den ersamen wüsen und vorsenighen alderlyuden des ghemenen copmans van der Duetschen hanze to Brugge in Vlanderen residerende, unsen bisunderen guden gunstigen vrunden.

P.S. Ersame wüse und bisundere gude gunstige vrunde. So also wy nu lange tüde hir in Engelant up sware coste und arbeyde vor demeheren koninghe unde zines rükes parlamente und raede de sake unses wewes sorchvoldichliken achtervolget hebben, so isset nu met Godes hulpe so vere gekomen, als wy anders nicht gemerken en können, dat wy bynnen dessen 14 daghen off daer unmetrent alle unse sake klaer in gescrijften besegelt unde vast hebben sullen, wante de here koninck und syn raed nu sund erlinges heren daerto assignert hebben, de uns uterliken expedieren (expedieren?) und uthrichten sullen in allen puncten tusschen deme heren koninghe und unser nacie to Utrecht concordet. . . . Ok mester Willem Hattecliff hefft uns van daghe gesecht, dat de twe breve, dar gii uns nu last van screven, opt nyge nu juwen begherte ummegescreven unde in siiden hangenden corden besegelt ziin, und de wel he in des heren koninges namen metter ersten to Brugge an Willeme Kackstone senden, und de sall se jw toleveren und umfangen daer dan weder sodane versegelinge als vor de Engelschen wederumme behoirt to umfangene. Item in dusser toleveringe up jw verbeterent were van noden ene protestacie met deme vorsecrevenen Willem Kackstone to makene, als van den Colners, waut se der hanse unde alder privilegien noch dagelix bruken.

XVII

Hanserecesse, Band 7.

Kg. Eduard von England beauftragt und bevollmächtigt den Kaufmann Wilhelm Caxton und den Notar Wilhelm Dollyng, den unter Zustimmung beider Theile bisher verzögerten Austausch der im utrechter Verträge von 1474 Feb. 28 vorgesehenen Bestätigungsurkunden mit den Vertretern der Hansestädte in Brügge vorzunehmen.

Westminster 1475 (a.r.n. 15.) Aug. 20.

XVIII

Hanserecess, Band 7.

Lucas de Via bezeugt, dass 1475 Sept. 4 in seiner und der dazu gerufenen Zeugen, Johann Stolle und Johann de Hangheren, Aelterleute des deutschen Kfm., Vincenz van Hulst, Priester, heinrich Loer und Johann Folquin, *oppidano Brugensi*, Gegenwart im Refektorium des Augustinerklosters zu Brügge Wilhelm Caxton und Wilhelm Dollyng sowie Johann Duerkop, Aeltermann, Mag. Goswin de Cousveldia und Mag. Gerhard Bruns, Secretaire, ihre unten eingerückten Vollmachten vorwiesen und erklärten, dass sie in Erfüllung des utrechter Vertrages gegenseitig Urkunden ausgetauscht, dergestalt, dass Caxton und Dollyng zwei mit dem lübecker Siegel besiegelte, Duerkop und Genossen drei mit dem siegel des Kg. Eduard von England versehene Urkunden erhalten, und dass der Wortlaut derselben, wie Verlesung und Vergleichung ergeben, vollkommen den Bestimmungen des Vertrages entspreche.

Brügge. 1475 Sept. 4.

XIX

Treaty Roll, French: 16 Eduard IV, m. 8.

De Protectione Willielmus Caxton nuper de London, mercer, Caxton. alias dictus Willielmus Caxton de London, marchant, qui in obsequio R(egis) in comitiva predilecti et fidelis consanguinei R(egis) Willielmi domini de Hastyngs, locumtenentis R(egis) generalis ville, castri et marchiarum R(egis) Calesie, super salua custodia vitellacione ac defensione ville, castri et marchiarum predictarum moratur, habet litteras R(egis) patentes de protectione cum clausula volumus per unum annum duraturas pro etc. . . .

William Caxton, who is serving in the suite of Lord Hastings, for the safe-keeping, supplying, and defence of Calais,¹ has the King's letters patent of protection.

Teste Regis apud Westmonasterium secundo die Decembris. Per billam de privato sigillo etc.

¹ This is purely nominal.

XX

Privy Seal (Chancery Warrants, I, 1319. 23.)

Memorandum quod secundo die Decembris anno subscripto ista billa liberata fuit domino cancellario Angliae apud Westmonasterium exequendum.

Let a protection with clause solimus be made for W. C. lately mercer or merchant of London,

to last for one year. Under our privy seal.

Fiat protectio cum clausula volumus pro Willielmo Caxton nuper de London mercer, alias dicto Willielmo Caxton de london marchant seu quocumque alio nomine censeatur, qui in obsequio nostro in Comitua predilecti et fidelis Consanguinei nostri Willielmi domini de Hastyns locumtenentis nostri generalis ville, castri et marchiarum nostrarum Calesie super salua Custodia, vitellacione ac defensione ville, castri et marchiarum predictarum moratur, per unum annum duratura. Datum nostro sub privato sigillo apud Westm. primo die Decembris Anno Regni nostri sexto decimo.

XXI

Early Chancery Proceedings : 64. 558.

To the ryht reverent fader in god
the Bisshop of Lincoln, chancellor of England.

Mekely besecheth your humble suppliant John Neue, citizen and mercer of London, that wher on, William Caxton, mercer, was endetted unto your said suppliant in the some of ^{xx} Ciiijx li. sterling, the same William willyng and entending true contentation and paiment to be made unto your said suppliant of the same somme, sent by writing and otherwise oute of flaudres to London vnto on John Salford mercer, which John then hadde and yet hath in his keypyng and gouernaunce diuers goodez and merchandisez and money of the said William Caxton, amountyng to much more than the said some amounteth vnto, desyryng and requyryng the same John Salford that he with the same goodez, merchandisez and money and such money as he myght gete for the same merchandisez and goodez shuld content and satisfie your said suppliant of his said dette.

Whych John Salford accordyng to the same desyre and request of the said William Caxton content(ed) and satisfied your said suppliant of xxvij li., parcell of his said dett at

seuerall tymes, and desyred your said suppliant to spare hym and to abyde of paiement of the residue therof till the ffest of Cristemmesse now last past, to thentent that the same goodez and merchandisez so beyng in his keyng myght be the better sold and to the more auaille of the said William Caxton; and your said suppliant, trustyng unto the same John Salford and for the weele of the said William Caxton, respited the same John of paiement of the said residue accordyng to hys desyre.

And it is so that sithen your said suppliant hath comen diuers tymes vnto the said John Salford to have paiement or satisfacion of the said residue of the dett aforsaid, and the said John Salford that to do or make refused; and subtylly and disteynably sithen the wrytyng sent vnto hym by the said William Caxton, that is to say this moneth of nouember now last past, the same John Salford hath prively taken an action of dette of CC li. in his awne name ayens the said William Caxton afor the mayor and thaldermen of the cite of London and hath so attach(ed) the said goodez and merchandisez and money in his awne hande, where in dede the same William Caxton aught hym then no peny, ne yet doth, and suffereth the same action and attach, honge styll as a dormaunt¹ to thentent to defraude your said suppliant of the said duete; and that he shuld take no awayle by any attachement made by hym of the same goodez, merchandisez or money after thattachment so made by the said John Salford, notwithstanding that sithen the said attachement made at the suyt of the same John Salford he paid vnto your said suppliant xx li. parcell of the said xxviij li. and also desired your said suppliant to respite the paiement of the residue in forme aboue said.

And becas of the saide refusell of the same John Salford, your said suppliant, now late hath taken an accion of dett of clxij li., residue of his said det, ayens the said William Caxton afore the same Mayor and Aldermen. And theruppon, after the customme of the said cite, hath attached certain goodez, merchandisez and money of the said William Caxton in the hands of the said John Salford, which attachement the said John Salford entendeth to discharge hym of by color of his said formor attachement so sotelly and priuely made and hangyng as is abouesaid, ayens all faith and gud consciens.

¹ A delightful phrase!

Pleas it your gud lordship the premisses tenderly to consider and theruppon to graunt ij seuerel writtes *cerciorari* to be direct vnto the said mayor and aldre to certifie the kyng in his chauncerie at a certen day by your gud lordship to be lymyted the said attachmente made in forme abouesaid and the causes of the same and theruppon to sett such direction and rule in the premisses as shall be accordyng to faith and gud conscience and this at the reuerence of god and in wey of charite.

Endorsed xxviii die Januarij.

XXII

Muniments of Westminster Abbey. Priors' Account Book, 1489-89.

On the verso of leaf 13 (dated recto the thirty-fourth year of the reign of Henry VI)

It(em) vij° die maij pro man(ibus)

W. Caxton lx^a.

It(em) J die Julii pro man(ibus)

W. Caxton C^a.

Anno regni Regis Ricardi j°

Memorandum quod recepi de W. Caxton pro duobus tenementis penultimo die Decembris, videlicet pro vno tenemento Xs. et pro alio iijs. iiijd.

xiijs. ijd.

Item de W. Caxton xxvj° die eiusdem mensis (Marcij)

xiijs. iiijd.

Memorandum quod recepi de W. Caxton vltimo die Junij pro vno tenemento Xs. pro quarteria anni et pro alio iijs. iiijd. pro quarteria anni. Item de eodem pro j° lofte supra portam Elemosinarie iijs. iiijd. pro termino dicto, summa

xvjs. viijd.

Anno regni Regis Ricardi ij°

Item v° die Octobris de W. Caxton pro tenementis

iijs. iiijd.

Item vj° die Januarij de W. Caxton pro vno tenemento

xiijs. iiijd.

Item de eodem pro alio tenemento

iijs. iiijd.

Item vj ^o die Aprilis de W. Caxston pro j tenemento	xiijs. iiijd.
Item de eodem pro alio tenemento (in vino) ¹	iijs. iiijd.
Item vltimo die Julij de W. Caxston	xxs.
Item viiiij ^o die Octobris de W. Caxston	xiijs. iiijd.
Item eodem die de eodem pro alio tenemento	iijs. iiijd.

Anno regni Regis Henrici vijⁱ primo

Memorandum quod recepi de W. Caxton x ^o die Januarij pro vno tenemento	xiijs. iiijd.
Item eodem die pro alio tenemento	xiijs. iiijd.
Item ij ^o die Aprilis de W. Caxton pro vna domo	xiijs. iiijd.
Item de eodem Willielmo pro altera domo	iijs. iiijd.
Item iiiij ^o die Julii de W. Caxton pro vna domo	xiijs. iiijd.
Item pro altera domo	iijs. iiijd.
Item pro Camera supra viam pro toto anno	iijs. iiijd.
Item xxvij ^o die Septembris de W. Caxton pro una domo	xiijs. iiijd.
Item pro altera domo	iijs. iiijd.
Item j ^o die Januarij de W. Caxton pro vna domo	xiijs. iiijd.
Item pro altera	iijs. iiijd.
Item xij ^o die Aprilis de W. Caxton pro duobus domibus	xvjs. viijd.
Item pro domo vidue juxta Caxston	vjs. viijd.
Item vj ^o die Julij de W. Caxton pro vno domo	xiijs. iiijd.
Item pro altera domo	iijs. iiijd.
Item pro Camera supra viam de eodem	iijs. iiijd.
Item primo die Septembris de W. Caxton pro vna domo	xiijs. iiijd.
Item pro altera	iijs. iiijd.
Item x ^o die Januarij de W. Caxton pro vna domo	xiijs. iiijd.
Item pro altera domo	iijs. iiijd.
Item x ^o die Aprilis de W. Caxton pro vna domo	xiijs. iiijd.
Item pro altera domo	iijs. iiijd.
Item j ^o die Julij de W. Caxton pro vno tenemento	iijs. iiijd.
Item pro altero	xiijs. iiijd.
Item pro altero	vjs. viijd.

¹ This example of payment in kind is noteworthy.

Item pro camera supra viam eundo ad Elemosi nariam pro toto anno	iijs. iiijd.
Item Memorandum quod ii ^o die Nouembris recepti de W. Caxton pro vno tenemento	iijs. iiijd.
Item pro altero	xiijs. iiijd.
Item pro altero	vjs. viijd.
De W. Caxton xij ^o die Januarij pro vna domo	vjs. viijd.
Item pro alia domo	xiijs. iiijd.
Item pro altera	iijs. iiijd.
Item xxiiij ^o die Marci de W. Caxton pro vno tenemento	xiijs. iiijd.
Item de eodem pro altero	iijs. iiijd.
Item de eodem pro altera domo	vjs. viijd.
Item xij ^o die Julij W. Caxton	xxiijs. iiijd.
Item xvij ^o die Octobris de W. Caxton pro vno tenemento	xiijs. iiijd.
Item de eodem pro altero	iijs. iiijd.
Item de eodem pro altero	vjs. viijd.
Item de W. Caxton pro vno tenemento	xiijs. iiijd.
Item pro alio	iijs. iiijd.
Item pro alio	vjs. viijd.
Item viij ^o die Aprilis pro vna domo de W. Caxton	xiijs. iiijd.
Item pro alia domo	vjs. viijd.
Item pro altera	iijs. iiijd.
Item xx ^o die Octobris de W. Kaxston	xxiijs. iiijd.
Memorandum quod vltimo die Januarij W. Kaxton soluit michi pro tribus domibus	xxiijs. iiijd.

XXIII

Muniments of Westminster Abbey. *Sacrist's Rolls* (Nos. 19728-19748)

Firme t(err)arum infra S(anc)tuarium.	
1475-6. De Willmo Stowell et Johanna Stowell pro vno shade cum gardin voc(ato) Seint Albans eidem di(misso) ad t(er- minum) xl a(nno)rum hoc anno iiij ^x	xiijs. iiijd.
De Johanne Myllyng pro iij ten(ementis) in medio s(anc)tuarij eidem di(missis) ad t(erminum) l ^o annorum hoc a(n- no) v ^{to}	xiijs. iiijd.

- 1476-7. De Robto Stowell et Johna Stowell pro ten(emento) s(ibi) di(misso) ad t(erminum) xl ann(or)um hoc a(nno) primo xiijs. iiijd.
- De alia shopa i(bide)m dimiss(a) *Willmo Caxton* per annu(m) xs.
- 1477-8. De Johanna Stowell et Roberto Stowell p(ro) ten(emento) voc(ato) Seint Albons s(ibi) di(misso) ad t(erminu)m xl^o a(nno)rum ij^o xiijs. iiijd.
- De vna shopa ib(ide)m d(i)m(is)s(a) ten(enti) xs.
- De al(ia) shopa di(missa) *Willmo Caxton* per an(num) xs.
- De al(ia) shopa di(missa) vt pro iij^{bas} quart(er)iis anni viijs. vjd.
- De Johanne Millyng pro tribus ten(emen)tis in medio s(anc)tuarij eid(e)m di(missis) ad term((in)um) l^o annorum hoc a(un)o vij^o xiijs. iiijd.
- 1478-9. De Roberto Stowell et Johanna Stowell pro ten(emento) voc(ato) Seint Albons s(ibi) di(misso) ad t(erminum) xl annorum h(oc) a(un)o ij^o xiijs. iiijd.
- De vna shopa ib(ide)m di(missa) per a(nnu)m xs.
- De alia shopa ib(ide)m di(missa) *Willmo Caxton* per annu(m) xs.
- De alia shopa di(missa) d(i)u(er)sis tenent(ibus) per a(nnum) xs.
- De Johanne Myllyng pro ten(emento) in medio s(anc)tuarij eidem di(misso) ad t(erminum) l^o a(nno)rum h(oc) a(un)o viij^o xiijs. iiijd.
- 1479-80.) missing
1480-81.)
- 1481-2. De Roberto Stowell et Johanna Stowell pro ten(emen)to vocat(o) Seint Albons sibi di(misso) ad term(inu)m xl a(nno)rum h(oc) a(un)o vj^{to} xiijs. iiijd.

- De ij^{bus} shopis ib(ide)m di(missis) henrico
Newman vt pro vno quarterio anni
vs. non plus q(uia) vacat vs.
- De *Willmo Caxton* pro vna shopa
ib(ide)m per a(nnum) xs.
- De Johanne Baron pro ij^{bus} shopis
ib(ide)m per a(nnu)m viijs.
- 1482-3. missing
- 1483-4. (lacuna) Johanna Stowell pro ten(emento)
vocat(o) Seint Albonis sibi.
di(misso) ad t(erminum) xl
a(nno)rum h(oc) a(nn)o viij^o xiijs. iiijd.
- „ m vt pro dicto Anno vs. non
plus q(uia) vacat vs.
- „ *xton* pro vna Shopa ib(ide)m per
annu(m) xs.
- „ a ib(ide)m ijs. vjd.
- De Johanne Baron pro ij^{bus} shopis
ib(ide)m per annu(m) viijs.
- 1484-5. De Roberto Stowell et Johanna Stowell
pro ten(emen)to vocat(o) Seint Albons
sibi di(misso) ad t(erminu)m xl a(n-
no)rum hoc a(nno) ix^o xiijs. iiijd.
- De vna shopa ib(ide)m n(ichi)l q(uia)
vacat nl.
- De *Willmo Caxton* pro vna shopa sibi
di(missa) per annu(m) xs.
- De alia Shopa ib(ide)m n(ichi)l q(uia)
vacat nl.
- De Johanne Baron pro ij^s shopis per
a(nnu)m viijs.
- 1485-6. De Roberto Stowell et Johanna Stowell
pro ten(emen)t(o) vocat(o) Seint
Albans s(ibi) d(imis)so ad term(inu)m
xl a(nno)rum h(oc) a(nn)o x^{mo} xiijs. iiijd.
- De vna shopa ib(ide)m n(ichi)l q(uia)
vacat nl.
- De *Willmo Cuxton* pro vna Shopa
ib(ide)m per annu(m) xs.

	De alia shopa ib(ide)m n(ichi)l q(ui)a vacat	nl.
	De Johanne Baron pro vna Shopa ib(ide)m sibi di(missa) per annu(m)	iijs.
1486-7.	De Robto Stowell et Johna Stowell pro ten(emen)t(o) vocat(o) Seynt Albons sibi dimiss(o) ad t(ermi)nu(m) ·xl· Annorum hoc Anno xj°	xiijs. iiijd.
	De vna shopa ib(ide)m nichil quia vAcAt	nl.
	De <i>Willmo Caxton</i> pro vna shopa ib(ide)m per annu(m)	xs.
	De alia shopa ib(ide)m Annex(a)	nl.
	De alia shopa ib(ide)m	nl.
	De Johe Baron pro vna Shopa ib(ide)m sibi dimiss(a) per annum	iijs.
1487-8.	De Roberto Stowell pro ten(emento) ib(ide)m vocat(o) Seynt Albons sibi dimiss(o) ad t(er)m(inum) xl annorum hoc anno duodecimo per annu(m)	xiijs. iiijd.
	De vna Shopa ibid(e)m hoc anno nichil quia vacat	nl.
	De <i>Willo Caxton</i> pro proxima Shopa ibid(e)m	xs.
	De alia shopa ib(ide)m Annex(a)	nl.
	De alia Shopa ibid(e)m hoc anno nichil quia vAcAt	nl.
	De Johanno Baron pro vna shopa ex-opposito domu(m) Bysett	iijs.
1488-9.	De Robto Stowell pro ten(emen)to ib(ide)m vocat(o) seynt Albons sibi dimiss(o) ad term(inum) x ^l annorum hoc anno xij° per annum	xiijs. iiijd.
	De vna Shopa situat(a) iuxta le Glashous dimiss(a) t(em)p(or)e p(ar)liamenti	ijs.
	De <i>Willo Caxton</i> pro alia shopa p(ro)x(im)a ib(ide)m per annu(m) sibi dimiss(a)	xs.
	De alia shopa iuxta dimiss(a) t(em)p(or)e p(ar)liamenti vna septimana	iiijd.

- De alia shopa exop(p)os(i)to ib(ide)m
J. Banastr pro d(ic)to anno ijs.
- De Johne Baron pro J Shopa situat(a)
exopposito domu(m) Bysett per an-
(n)u(m) iiijs.
- 1489-90. De Robto Stowell pro ten(emen)to ibidem
vocat(o) le seynt albons sibi dimisso
ad t(e)rm(inum) xl annorum hoc anno
quartidecimo per annu(m) xiijs. iiijd.
- De vna shopa situat(a) iux(ta) le logge
vitrar(ius) dimiss(a) hoc anno iij
t(e)n(e)n(tibus) iijs.
- De *Willo Caxton* pro alia Shopa [per]
(iu)xta ib(ide)m per annu(m) sibi
dimiss(a) xs.
- De vacua placat(a) iux(ta) ib(ide)m
d(i)miss(a) hoc anno in trib(us) ten(e-
me)n(tis) per xix septi(m)anas Jd pro
Septi(m)ana xixd.
- De alia Shopa situat(a) exopposito
ib(ide)m d(i)miss(a) Johi Banast
Groc(erius) per annu(m) iijs.
- De Johne Baron pro vna shopa situat(a)
exopposito Taberna(m) nup(er) Bisett
per annu(m) iijs.
- 490-1. De Robto Stowell pro ten(emen)to vo-
cat(o) Seynt albons sibi dimisso ad
t(e)rminu(m) x^l annorum hoc anno
quintodecimo per annu(m) xiijs. iiijd.
- De una Shopa iux(ta) logium vitrar(ium)
hoc anno in iij t(e)n(e)m(enti)s di-
miss(is) iijs.
- De *Willo Caxton* pro alia shopa annex(a)
ibidem per annum xs.
- De alia shopa ibidem dimiss(a) per
annu(m) iijs.
- De Johanne Baron pro Shopa situat(a)
exopposito taberna(m) Bysett per
annu(m) iijs.

- 1491-2. De *Willmo Caxton* pro shopa annex(a)
 ib(ide)m modo in ma(n)ib(us) Johis
 Wynkyn per annum xs.
 De alia shopa exopposito ibid(e)m hoc
 anno n(ichi)l quia vacat nl.
- 1492-3. De Johanno Wynkyn pro shopa An-
 nex(a) nup(er) *Caxton*[is] per annum xs.
 De alia shopa exopposito ibid(e)m d(i)-
 miss(a) diu(er)sis tenentib(us) hoc
 anno xxd.
- Almoner's Rolls (19091-5)*
- 1482-3. De Camera sup(ra) portam exteriorem
 nuper de D(auid) Selley at T(erminum)
 xl annorum hoc a(nn)o xxxvj^o iam in
 tenencia *Willi Caxton* per annum iij s. iiij d.
- 1483-4. De camera supra portam exteriorem
 nup(er)de D(aui)d Selley ad terminum
 xl annorum hoc a(nn)o xxxvij^o iam in
 manib(us) prioris nichil hoc anno nl.
- 1484-5. De cam(er)a sup(ra) portam exteriorem
 nup(er) de Daud Selly ad term(inum)
 xl annorum h(oc) a(nn)o xxxviij modo
 in man(ibus) prioris n(ichi)l h(o)c
 a(nn)o nl.
- 1485-6. missing.
- 1486-7. De cam(er)a sup(ra) portam exteriorem
 nup(er) (de) Daud Selly ad term(inum)
 xl annorum h(o)c a(nn)o xl et ulti(m)o
 an(n)o in mani(bus) prioris n(ichi)l
 h(o)c anno nl.

XXIV

Receipts and Payments of the Treasury. T.R.B. 124. Henry VII.
 f. 80

ALSO paid to William Caxton for the expenses of
 dyuers officers of the Kinges Receyt at Westm.
 attending for certeyn matters for the King at
 iij times this term. iij s. viij d.
iij s. ij d.
vijs. xd.

f. 92

ALSO paid to William Caxton for the expens of
 dyuers officers of the Kings Receyt at Westm.
 the iij day of Juyll attendynge ther for dyuers
 appoyntments to be made for the See and
 otherwise. iijs.

(Between Easter of the fifth year of the reign of Henry VII
 and Michaelmas of the sixth year, 1490-1491.)

XXV

Archives of Bruges: Cent Groenenbouc A.

Folio 342, verso, n. 2.

Comme quetion et difference soient meues en laplaine chambre
 1458, deschevins de Bruges, par et entre Guillaume Ouvray,
 Mars 4. comme chief gouverneur des marchans du royaume
 Dangleterre, residens et coversans en ladicte ville de Bruges,
 ensemble certains desdis marchans, d'une part, et Richart
 Charrety, marchant anglois, dautre part: a cause de l'arrest
 et prinse que ledit Guillaume avoit fait faire sur la
 personne dudit Richart, dont ledit Richart requerroit estre
 relaxez, disant que ladicte prinse estoit faict a tort et sans
 cause. Le dessusdit Guillaume disant et maintenant le con-
 traire, assavoir que il avoit ledit Richart fait prendre et arrester
 a bonne cause et ou nom de la nation Dangleterre, et que
 pourtant il devoit demourer prisonnier jusques a ce quil auroit
 amende certain trespas par lui commiz contre les ordonnances
 de ladicte nation par les raisons qui sensuient :

Assavoir que selon les anciens privileges que les marchans
 dudit royaume ont audit pays de Flandres, ilz devoient estre
 soubz le gouvernement de leur gouverneur, et puet ledit
 gouverneur, ensemble lesdit marchans, faire et ordonner toutes
 manieres dordonnances quil leur semblent proufitables, accorder
 les questuons entre lesdiz marchans, corriger les rebelles, et
 de tous trespas commiz par aucun diceulx contre leur ordon-
 nances, faire faire amendement en tout cas, excepte des cas
 criminelz dont punition de corps ou de membre doit ensuir.

Or estant il ainsi que pour certain justes et raisonnables
 causes a ce mouvans les communs marchans de ladicte nation,
 certaine ordonnance estoit faicte par laquelle fu defendu a tous

les marchans dudit royaume de non acheter ou vendre a la derriere foire de Anvers, sur certaines et grosses paines ; contre laquelle ordonnance ledit Richart avoit fait et trespasse ycelle ; et a cause dudit trespas, il avoit este appelle devant ladicte nation ; et pour ce quil se constitua rebelle et desobeissant, non voulant tenir ce que par ladicte ordonnance lui estoit dit, ledit Guillaume, ou nom que dessus, ensuiant la coustume que autres ses predecesseurs avoient entretenus, avoit ledit Richart fait arrester et mettre en prinsons.

Le dessusdit Richart a lencontre respondant que il nestoit point tenu de obeir ne de tenir les dictes ordonnances, car il navoit point fait du serement a eulx et nestoit point soubz eulx ; et se il en estoit aucunement tenu, si disoit il que lesdictes ordonnances il nen scavoit riens au vray, et quant on les lui signifa en ladicte foire, de lors en avant il sen deporta de y vendre ou acheter ; offrant de ce faire son serement combien comme il lui sembloit, il non estoit point tenuz de le faire.

Le dessusdit Guillaume oudit nom disant comme dessus, que le dit Richart le savoit bien autant quil venist a ladicte foire, et que ainsi lavoit il confesse et recongneu devant certaine marchans, protestant de sa desobeissance dudit Richart envers son prince seigneur le roy Dangleterre, dont il estoit subject, et de lui, Guillaume qui de par le Roy est institue gouverneur comme dessus.

XXVI

Ordinance of the Mercer's Company.

No. 4.

Also that no person under the said Obeisance send over the sea his Apprentices or Lowes there to occupy buy or sell unto the time the said apprentices or lowes have taken the oath therfore made before one of the Wardens for the time being. And that once in his service and so as often as he changeth Master upon pain the Master to pay at every time so defective to the Box 40s.

(For the actual oath see Ordinance 55, given in full in Blades' *Life of Caxton.*)

XXVII

Early Chancery Proceedings, 128. 79.

To the moost reverent fadre in god tharchebishop of Canterbury, chancellor of England.

Full pytously complayneth unto your most gracious lordshipp your pouer Orator and dayly bedesman, Gerard Crop, son in lawe late to oon William Cakkeston, late of Westminster bokeprynter, that where the same William Cakkeston lying in his deth bed bequaythed in his last wyll unto your said Gerardo viij^x li. in rady money to hym to be delyvered immadyatly after the dath of the said William Cakkeston and made his executor oon Sir Richard Ward, preest, and deyde; after wos demise your said pouer Orator desyred of the said S. Richard the said iiij^xli. to hym to haue been delyuered accordyng to the said last wyll of his said farder in lawe whereto the said S. Richard said then he was ready to do with that that your said Orator woold bryng aquytaunce for ij sufficient men to record his delyvery of the said money for aquytaunce: wherupon the said Orator caused an aquytaunce to be made for and brought with hym oon Robert Stowell of Westminster, Esquyre, and oon William Myltryp, taylloure, shewyng to the said Sir Richard he had brought his aquytaunce and the said ij men to record accordyng to his forseyd desire.

Wherto then the sayd Richard of his disceytfull couetous and malycyous mynd answered (?)¹ and said that he woold not delyuer the said money onlesse he wer therto compelled by the spyrytuall lawe and also by the same discharged: wherupon your said pouer Orator to his importunate cost and charge sued in the archedycon Court of Westminster and ther recovered the said iiij^x li. agenst the said S. Richard which "sayeng" the same S. Richard said then opynly in the same court that he woold not yet delyver the said money without commaundement of your grace and, to thentent that your pouer Orator shuld never have hys sayd duty but utterly to be dystryed in pryson upon and by the malicious mind of the same S. Richard, the sayd Sir Richard upon the morwe next ensuyng the said recovery had so in the said spiritual court caused your said pouer Orator to be arested in london upon an action of

¹ This reading was suggested by the late Mr. Gordon Duff.

trespass and surety of possession and also caused the kinges commaundement in the name of master Raynold Bray (erasure) to be layd then upon hym wherto nayther the kynges grace ne the said Master Bray were of Knowlegge of.

And ouer that the said S. Richard purchessed then of your grace a speciall wryt of Supplicant and by the meanes therof hath keped your said pouer Orator in pryson in the cuntrye of bredestrete euer sythen midsomer hertherto ne wyll so sover his own wyfe to cum at hym ne releve him, which is agens all lawe and gud iustice and to the utter most wrongfull vndoing of your said pouer. Orator vnlesse thanne your speciall gracious lordship be to hym the rather shewed in that behalf.

Wherefore pleas it your said moost gracious lordship the premyses graciously considered to grant a wryt of *corpus cum causa* to be dyrett unto the Sheriffs of London, commandyng them by the laws to bryng up afore the kyng in his chancery the body of your said pouer Orator with the cause of his emprysounment ther at a certeyn day by your gud lordship to be lymyted, and there then the said Sir Richard to be to answer to the premises and there then dycision to be hade therin as gud conscience shall requyre. And your said pouer Orator shall contynually pray to god for your gud grace long to endure to his pleasure, Amen.

Endorsed: Ss Coram Dno.R. in Canc. sua die Sabbi. px. futur.

XXVIII

Early Chancery Proceedings, 192. 47.

To the most Reverend ffader in god the lord Cardynal Arch-
bysshep of Canterbury, Prymat and chaunceler of England.

Humbly showith vnto your most gracious lordship your pour oratrice, Elizabeth Crop, that wheras the cause of devorce uppon precontract dependith in your Court before your Chancelor, betwixt your said oratrice and Gerard Crop at the sute of the same Gerard, and it is so most gracious lord that, defendyng the said cause before your said Chancelor, oon Richard Wellys of late comensid an action of dette of the some of iij li. ayenst your said oratrice before the Sheriffs of

London, suyng by the said actyon that he shuld be (secured?) for the said Gerard for payment of the said lij li.

And afterward the said Richard was nonsute in the said action and on that the said Richard of new of envy and malyce hath causid an action of trespass to be comensid agenst your said oratrice before the same Sheriffs in the name of oon Thomas Fachell, Gentilman, and theruppon hath her arest and in prison, the same Thomas not knowyng therof, he beyng in the servyse of our souerayn lord the king, of deforce which action your said pour oratrice is deteyned in pryson and cannot be letyn to bayle howbeit she hath offerd good and sufficient suerte to answer to the said action, yet that notwithstanding she can nat be enlargid onlesse then she wilbe agreable to content and pay the said some of iij li. to the said Richard, unto which agrement, yf your said oratrice wuld conducend, the same Richard hath promysid to relese the said action of trepass of the same Thomas Fachell.

Wherefore pleas it your said most gracious lordship the premysses to consider and to graunt a writ of *Corpus cum Causa* to be dyret unto the said Sheriffs, commanding them therby to bryng the body of your said pour oratrice with the cause of her arest to the Kinges Court of Chancery, there the premyss to be examyned and iudged as may accorde with ryght and conscience and this for the love of yod and in the way of charite.

Endorsed: Coram Domino Rege in Canc. suo h. instant. die Veneris xvij die Octobris.

XXIX

A loose sheet of paper at the P.R.O.

To tharchdeacon of Westm' that nowe is and for the tyme shalbe.

We, Richard FitzJames, Almoner and Counsaillor unto oure souverain lord the King, and Richard Hatton, chaplayne and counsaillor vnto our said souverain lord, greting in our Lord God euerlasting.

And whereas we, the said Richard and Richard, were appoynted, lymytted and assigned by our said souverain lord and the lordes of his most noble counsaill to examine, determyne and pacifie a certain variaunce dependyng betweene Gerard Crophe of Westminster, taillour, of the oone partie, and

Elizabeth, the daughter of William Caxton, wif to the same Gerard, of the othre partie ; we, the vijth daie of May, the xjth yere of our said souverain lord, had the said parties before us in the Kinges Chapell within his palois of Westminster at this appoyntement and conclusion by their both assentes and agrementes :—

That noon of them, ne any othre for them, shall from hensforth vex, sue or trouble othre for any maner matier or cause them concernyng for matrimony betwix them before had ; and everie of them to lyve sole from othre, except that the said Gerard shall mowe fynde the meanes to have the love and favour of the said Elizabeth.

For thaccomplishment of which agrement eithre of them of their owne voluntarie willes bound them self unto us by their faithes and trouthes, and never to varie from their said promyses. And therupon the said Gerard to have of the bequest of William Caxton, the fadre of the said Elizabeth, xx^{ti} prynted legendes at xiiij^s iiiij^d a legend. And the said Gerard to delyver a generall acquitaunce unto thexecutors of William Caxton, her said fadre, for their discharge in that behalf. And besides thies premisses both the said parties were agreed before us to be bound, eche to othre, in C li. by their dedes obligatorie with the condicions aboue wreten to performe all the premisses.

In wittenesse wherof I, the said Richard FitzJames, have to thies presentes sette the seale of myn office, and I, the said Richard Hatton, have sette my seal, and eithre of us subscribed our names with oure owne handes, the xx^{ti} daie of May the xjth yere of the reigne of our souverain Lord.

(1496)

XXX

Controlment Roll : 12 Henry VII. 127, mem. 1.

Inquirat de bonis et catallis Gerardo Cropp de villa Westm(onasterii) in compredicto taillour—Vt die Jovis prox. ante festum Sancti Egidii Abbis anno duodecimo supradicto ad sectam Rob(er)ti Redknapp nuper de London mercer de plito contempto et contra forma edictuli de conspiratoribus nuper edit. Per brevia contr. de mense Marcii Anno XII supradicto.¹

¹ This transcript was kindly furnished for me by its discoverer, Mr. H. R. Plomer.

The Prologues and Epilogues of Caxton

CAXTON.

B

I

The Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye

[1475]

[PROLOGUE]¹Recto,
leaf 2.

h Ere begynneth the volume intituled and named the recuyell of the historyes of Troye / composed and drawn out of dyuerce bookes of latyn in to frensshe by the ryght venerable persone and worshipfull man. Raoul le ffeure. preest and chapelayn vnto the ryght noble gloryous and myghty prynce in his tyme Phelip duc of Bourgoyne of Braband etc In the yere of the Incarnacion of our lord god a thousand foure honderd sixty and foure / and translated and drawn out of frenshe in to englissh by Willyam Caxton mercer of y^e cyte of London / at the comaundement of the right hye myghty and vertuose Pryncesse hys redoubtyd lady. Margarete by the grace of god. Duchesse of Bourgoyne of Lotryk of Braband etc / Whiche sayd translacion and werke was begonne in Brugis in the Countre of Flaundes the fyrst day of marche the yere of the Incarnacion of our said lord god a thousand foure honderd sixty and eyghte / And ended and fynysshid in the holy cyte of Colen the .xix. day of septembre the yere of our sayd lord god a thousand foure honderd sixty and enleuen etc.

And on that other side of this leef foloweth the prologe.

¹ This prologue is printed in red.

I

Le Recueil des Histoires de Troyes¹

[1476]

[PROLOGUE]

Cy commence le volume Intitule le recueil des histoires de troyes Compose par venerable homme raoul le feure prestre chappellain de mon tresredonte seigneur Monseigneur le Duc Phelippe de bourgoingne En lan de grace. mil. .cccc. .lxiii. . :

Quant Je regarde et congnois les oppinions des hommes nourris en aucunes singulieres histoires de troyes / Et voy et regarde aussi que de Icelle faire vng recueil Je Indigne ay receu le commandement de tres noble et tres v'tueux prince Philippe par la grace faiseur de toutes graces duc de bourgoingne / de lothrique / de brabant et de lembourch / Conte of flandres. dartois et de bourgoingne / Palatin de haynau de hollande de zeelande et de namur / Marquis du saint empire Seigneur de frise de salins et de malines / Certes Je treuve assez a pensser. Car des histoires dont. vueil recueil faire Tout le monde parle p hures translatez du latin en françois moins beaucoup que Je nen traitteray / Et aucuns en ya qui sahurtenant seulement aleurs particuliers hures Pourquoi Je craing escrire plus que leurs hures ne font mencion / Mais quant Je considere et poise le tres crenieu command de Icellm tres redoubte prince qui est cause de ceste œuure nō pour corriger les hures Ia so lempnellement trāslatez Aincois pour augmenter Je me rendray obaissant Et au moins mal que Je pourray feray trois hures qui ims en vng prendront pour nom le recueil des troyennes histoires /

Coloured
ornamental
capital.

¹ By Raoul le Fèvre. This volume issued from the Caxton-Mansion press, but may have been the work of Mansion only.

verso, leaf 2.

Whan I remembre that euery man is bounden by the comandement ʒ counceyll of the wyse man to eschewe slouthe and ydlenes whyche is moder and nourysshar of vyces and ought to put my self vnto vertuous ocupacion and besynesse / Than I hauynge no grete charge of ocupacion folowynge the sayd counceyll / toke a frenche booke and redde therin many strange and meruayllous historyes where in I had grete pleasyr and delyte / as well for the nouelte of the same as for the fayr langage of frenshe. whyche was in prose so well and compendiously sette and wreton / whiche me thought I vnderstood the sentence and substance of euery mater / And for so moche as this booke was newe and late maad and drawen in to frenshe / And neuer had seen hit in oure englissh tonge / I thought in my self hit shold be a good besynes to translate hyt in to oure englissh / to thende that hyt myght be had as well in the royame of Englonde as in other landes / and also for to passe therwyth the tyme. and thus concluded in my self to begynne this sayd werke / And forthwith toke penne and ynke and began boldly to renne forth as blynde bayard in thys presente werke whyche is named the recuyell of the troian historyes And afterward whan I remembryd my self of my symplenes and vnperfightnes that I had in bothe langages / that is to wete in frenshe ʒ in englissh for in france was I neuer / and was born ʒ lerned myn englissh in kente in the weeld where I doubte not is spoken as brode and rude englissh as is in ony place of englonde ʒ haue contynued by the space of .xxx. yere for the most parte in the contres of Braband. flandres holand ||

recto, leaf 3.

and zeland and thus whan alle thysse thynges cam to fore me aftyr that y had made and wreten a fyue or six quayers y fyll in dispayr of thys werke and purposid nomore to haue contynuyd therin and tho quayers leyd a part and in two yere aftyr laboured nomore in thys werke And was fully in wyll to haue lefte hyt. tyll on a tyme hit fortunod that the ryght hyghe excellent and ryght vertuous prynces my ryght redoughted lady mylady Margarete by the

grace of god suster vnto y^e kynge of Englonde and of france. my souerayn lord Duchesse of Bourgoine of lotryk. of brabant. of lymburgh. and of luxenburgh Countes of fflandres of artoys ʒ of bourgoine Palatinee of heynewd of holand of zeland and of namur Marquesse of y^e holy empire, lady of ffryse of Salius and of mechlyn sente for me to speke wyth her good grace of dyuerce maters among y^e whyche y lete her hyenes haue knowleche of y^e forsayd begynnynge of thys werke which anone comanded me to shewe the sayd .v. or .vi. quayers to her sayd grace and whan she had seen hem. anone she fonde a defaute in myn englissh whiche sche comanded me to amende and more ouer comanded me straytli to contynue and make an ende of the resydue than not translated. whos dre defull comandement y durste in no wyse disobey because y am a seruant vnto her sayde grace and resseieue of her yerly ffee and other many goode and great benefetes and also hope many moo to ressey[u]e¹ of her hyenes but forthwyth wente and labouryde in the sayde translacion aftyr my symple and pour connyng also nigh as y can folowyng myn auctor mekeli beseching || the bounteuous hyenes of my said lady that of her benyuolence liste to accepte ʒ take in gree this symple ʒ rude werke here folowyng. and yf ther be ony thyng wretton or sayd to her playsir. I shall thynke my labour well employed and where as ther is defawte. y^t she arette hyt to y^e symplenes of my connyng whiche is ful small in this behalue and requyre ʒ praye alle them that shall rede this sayd werke to correcte hyt ʒ to hold me excusid of the rude ʒ symple translacion And thus y ende my prologe . . .

verso, leaf 2.

Ere foloweth y^e plogue of that worshipful man Raoul le feure whiche was Auctor of this present book in the ffrensh tonge.

¹ text: resseyne

The Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye

[1475]

At end of Book II

recto, 251,
l. 24.

Besechyng her that is cause of this translacōn out of frenshe in to this symple and rude englissh/ that is to wete my right redoubtyd lady Margrete by the grace of god suster of my souerayn lord the kyng of england and of ffrance etc. Duchesse of bourgoyne and of Brabant etc. that she wole resseyue my Rude labour in thanke and in gree :.

[EPIL. TO BK. II.]

verso 251.

T Hus endeth the seconde book of the recule of the historyes of Troyes / whiche bookes were late translated in to frenshe out of latyn / by the labour of the venerable persone raoul le feure preest as a fore is said / And by me Indigne and unworthy translated in to this rude englissh / by the comandement of my said redoubtid lady duches of Bourgone: And for as moche as I suppose the said two bokes ben not had to fore this tyme in oure englissh langage / therefore I had the better will to accomplisshe this said werke / which werke was begonne in Brugis / ʒ contynued in gaunt And finysshid in Coleyn In the tyme of y^e troublous world / and of the grete deuy sions beyng and reygnynge as well in the royames of england and fraunce as in all other places vnyuersally thurgh the world that is to wete the yere of our lord a thousand four honderd lxxi. And asfor the thirde book whiche treteth of the generall ʒ last destruccion of Troye Hit nedeth not to translate hit into englissh / ffor as moche as that worshifull ʒ religious man dan Iohn lidgate¹ monke of Burye dide translate hit but late / after whos werke I fere to take vpon me that am not worthy to bere his penner ʒ ynke horne after hym. to medle me in that werke. But yet for as moche as I am bounde to contemplare my sayd ladyes good grace and also that his

¹ Bks. I-IV. (1412-20).

werke is in ryme / And as ferre as I knowe hit is not
had in prose in our tonge / And also paraventure / he
translated after some other Auctor than this is / And
yet for as moche as dyuerce men ben of dyuerce deayres.
Some to rede in Ryme and metre. and some in prose
And also be cause that I haue now good leyzer ^{seyng} in
Coleyn And haue none other thyn ge to doo at this tyme ||
In eschewyng of ydlenes moder of all vices. I haue de- recto, 252.
liberated in my self for the contemplacion of my sayd re
doubtid lady to take this laboure in hand as y^e suffrance
and helpe of almyghty god. whome I mekely supplye
to gyue me grace to accomplysse hit to the playsir of
her that is causer therof and that she resseyue hit in gre
of me her faithfull trewe j most humble seruant etc.

Thus endeth the seconde book.

The Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye

[1475]

[EPILOG. TO BK. III.]

T Hus ende I this book whyche I haue transla- recto, 251.
ted after myn Auctor as nyghe as god hath gy-
uen me connyng to whom be gyuen the laude j
preysyng / And for as moche as in the wrytyng of the
same my penne is worn / myn hande wery j not stedfast
myn eyen dimmed with ouermoche lokyng on the whit
paper / and my corage not so prone and redy to laboure
as hit hath ben / and that age crepeth on me dayly and
febleth all the bodye / and also be cause I haue promysid
to dyuerce gentilmen and to my frendes to adresse to hem
as hastely as I myght this sayd book / Therefore I haue
practysed j lerned at my grete charge and dispense to
ordeyne this said book in prynte after the maner j forme
as ye may here see / and is not wretton with penne and
ynke as other bokes ben / to thende that euery man may
haue them attones / ffor all the bookes of this storye na-
med the recule of the historyes of troyes thus empyntid
as ye here see were begonne in oon day / and also fynys-

verso, 351.

shid in oon day / whiche book I haue presented to my
sayd redoubtid lady as a fore is sayd. And she hath
well acceptid hit / and largely rewarded me / wherfore
I beseche almyghty god to rewarde her euerlastyng blisse
after this lyf. Prayng her said grace and all them that
shall rede this book not to desdaigne the symple and rude
werke. nether to repleye against the sayyng of the ma-
ters towchyd in this book / thauwh hyt acorde not vn-
to the translacion of other whiche haue wreton hit / ffor
dyuerce men haue made dyuerce bookes / whiche in all
poyntes acorde not as Dictes. Dares. and Homerus
for dictes ʒ homerus as grekes sayn and wryten fauo-
rably for the grekes / and gyue to them more worship||
than to the troians / And Dares wryteth otherwyse
than they doo / And also as for the propre names / hit
is no wonder that they acorde not / ffor somme oon name
in thyse dayes haue dyuerce equyuocacions after the con-
trees that they dwlle in / but alle acorde in conclusion the
generall destruccion of that noble cyte of Troye / And
the deth of so many noble prynces as kyniges dukes Er-
les barons. knyghtes and comyn peple and the ruyne
irreperable of that Cyte that neuer syn was reedefyed
whiche may be ensample to all men duryng the world
how dredefull and leopardous it is to begynne a warre
and what hornes. losses. and deth foloweth. Terfore
thapostle saith all that is wreton is wreton to our doc-
tryne / whiche doctryne for the comyn wele I beseche
god maye be taken in suche place and tyme as shall be
most nedefull in encrecyng of peas loue and charyte
whyche graunte vs he that suffryd for the same to be
crucyfied on the rood tree / And saye we all Amen
for charyte. .

II

The Game and Playe of the Chesse

[First Edition, 1475]

[PROLOGUE]

Simple
illuminated
capital T.
2, recto.

O the right noble / right excellent ꝓ vertuous prince
George duc of Clarence Erle of Warwyk and of
salisburye / grete chamberlayn of Englund ꝓ leutenant
of Ireland oldest broder of kynge Edward by the grace
of god kynge of England and of fraunce / your most
humble seruant William Caxton amonge other of your
seruantes sendes vnto yow peas. helthe. Joye and victo-
rye upon your Enemyes / Right highe puyssant and
redoubted prynce / For as moche as I haue vnderstand
and knowe / that ye are enclined vnto the comyn wele
of the kynge our sayd saueryn lord. his nobles lordes
and comyn peple of his noble royaume of Englund / and
that ye sawe gladly the Inhabitans of y^e same e[n]formed¹
in good. vertuous. prouffitable and honeste maners.
In whiche your noble persone wyth guydyng of your
hows haboundeth / gyuyng light and ensample vnto all
other / Therefore I haue put me in deuour to translate a li-
tyll book late comen in to myn handes out of frensh in to
englisshe / In which I fynde thauctorites. dictees. and

¹ text: euformed

II

The Game and Playe of the Chesse

[Second Edition, 1483]

[PROLOGUE]

Simple
illuminated
capital T.
Sig. a ij.
recto.

He holy appostle and doctour of the peple saynt
Poule sayth in his epystle. Alle that is wryten
is wryten vnto our doctryne and for our ler-
nyng. Wherefore many noble clerkes haue endeuoyned
them to wryte and compyle many notable werkys and
historyes to the ende that it myght come to the knowlege
and vnderstandyng of suche as ben ygnoraunt. Of which

II

Jean de Vignay

[PROLOGUE¹]

A Tres noble et excellent prince Jehan de
france duc de normendie et ausne filz de
philipe par la grace de dieu Roy de france.

Frere Jehan de Vignay vostre petit Religieux
entre les autres de vostre seignoire / paix
sante Joie et victoire sur vos ennemis.
Treschier et redoubte seigneur / pour ce que
Jay entendu et scay que vous veez et
oués volontiers choses profitables et honestes

et qui tendent alinformacion de bonnes
meurs ay Je mis vn petit liuret de latin en
franchois le quel mest venuz a la main
nouvellement /

ou quel plussieurs auctoritez
et dis de docteurs et de philosophes et de

¹ A French translation of *De Luto scaccorum* by J. de Cessolis.
Br. Mus. Harleian 5440. Cp. Add. MSS. 15698 & 21461.

the nombre is infenyte / And accordyng to the same saith
Salamon. that the nombre of foles. is infenyte / And
among alle other good werkys. It is a werke of ryght
special recomandacion to enforme and to late vnderstonde
wysedom and vertue vnto them that be not lernyd ne can
not dyscerne wysedom fro folye. Therne emonge whom
there was an excellent doctour of dyuynyte in the royaume
of fraunce of the ordre of thospital of Saynt Johns of
Jherusalem whiche entended the same and hath made a
book of the chesse moralysed. whiche at suche tyme as I
was resident in brudgys in the counte of Flaundes cam
in to my handes / which whan I had redde and ouerseene /

verso, 2.

stories of auncient Doctours philosophes poetes and of other wyse men whiche been recounted ʒ applied vnto the moralite of the publike wele as well of the nobles as of the comyn peple after the game and playe of the chesse / whiche booke right puyssant and redoubtid lord I haue made in the name and vnder the shadewe of your noble protection / not presumyng to correcte or enpoigne ony thyng ayenst your noblesse /. For god be thankyd your excellent renome shyneth as well in strange regions as with in the royaume of england gloriously vnto your honour and la[u]de¹ / whiche god multeplye and encrece But to thentent that other of what estate or degre he or || they stande in. may see in this sayd lityll book / yf they gouerned them self as they ought to doo / Wherfor my right dere redoubted lord I requyre ʒ supplye your good grace not to desdaygne to resseyue this lityll sayd book in gree and thanke / as well of me your humble and vnknown seruant as of a better and gretter man than I am /. For the right good wylle that I haue to make this lityll werk in the best wyse I can / ought to be reputed for the fayte and dede / And for more clerely to procede in this sayd book I haue ordeyned that the chapitres ben sette in the begynnynge to thende that ye may see more playnly the mater Wherof the book treteth etc.

¹ text: lande

[m]e¹ semed ful necessarye for to be had in englissh / And in eschewyng of ydlenes And to thende that somme which haue not seen it / ne vnderstonde frenssh ne latyn. J delybered in my self to translate it in to our maternal tonge / And whan I so had achyeued the sayd translacion / J dyde doo sette in enprynte a certeyn nombre of theym / Whiche anone were depesshed and solde. wherfore by cause thys sayd book is ful of holsom wysedom and requysyte vnto euery astate and degre / J haue purposed to enprynte it / shewyng therin the figures of suche persons ||

¹ original 'ne'

poetes et des anciens sages / sont Racontez
 et sont appliquez a la moralite des
 nobles hommes et des gens de peuple selon le
 gieu des eschez le quel liure Tres puissant
 et tres redoubte Seigneur jay fait on nom
 et soubz vmbre de vous pour laquelle chose
 treschier seigneur Je vous suppli et requier

de bonne volente de cuer que il vous daigne
 plaire a recevoir ce liure en gre aussi bien que
 de vn greigneur maistre de moy / car la
 tres bonne volente que Jay de mielx faire se
 je pouoie me doit estre reputee pour le fait /
 Et pour plus clerement proceder en ceste euure /
 Jay ordene que les chappitres du liure
 soient escrips et mis au commencement afin de
 veoir plus plaine ent la matiere de quoy le
 dit liure parole.

as longen to the playe. In whom al astates and degrees
 ben comprysed / besechyng al them that this lital werke
 shal see / here / or rede to haue me for excused for the rude j
 symple makyng and reducyn in to our englishe / And
 where as is defaute to correcte and amende / and in so doyng
 they shal deserue meryte and thanke , and I shal pray for
 them , that god of his grete mercy shal rewarde them in
 his euerlastyng blisse in heuen / to the whiche he brynge
 vs / that wyth his precious blood redemed vs Amen

Sig. a ij,
verso.

This book is deuyded and departed in to four traytyes
 and partyes

*Excerpt 1.*¹Folio 37 r.
l. 27.

37, verso.

For ther is
no thyng at this day that so moche greueth rome and
Italye as doth the college of notaries and aduocates pub
licque/ For they ben not of oon a corde/ Alas and in
Engeland what hurte doon the aduocates. men of lawe. ||
And attorneyes of court to the comyn peple of y^e royatme
as well in the spirituell lawe as in the temporall/ how
torne they the lawe and statutes at their pleasir/ how ete
they the peple/ how enpouere they the comynte/ I suppose
that in alle Cristendom ar not so many pletars attorneyes
and men of the lawe as ben in englond onely/ for yf they
were nombrid all that lange to the courtes of the chann
cery kinges benche. comyn place. cheker. ressayt and helle
And the bagge berars of the same/ hit shold amounte to
a grete multitude And how all thyse lyue ʒ of whome.
yf hit shold be vttrid ʒ told/ hit shold not be beleuyd.
For they entende to theyr synguler wele and prouffyt
and not to the comyn/

*Excerpt 2.*Folio 68 r.
l. 9.

Alas

what haboundance was some tymes in the royames.
And what prosperite/ In whiche was Iustice/ And euery
man in his office contente/ how stood the cytees that tyme
in worship and renome/ how was renommed the noble
royame of Englond Alle the world dredde hit And
spaek worship of hit/ how hit now standeth and in
what haboundance I reporte me to them that knowe hit
yf ther ben theeuys wyth in the royame or on the see/ they
knowe that laboure in the royame And sayle on the see
I wote well the fame is grete therof I pray god saue
that noble royame And sende good true and politicque
counceyllours to the gouernours of the same etc/

*Conclusion.*71. verso,
l. 28.

And therefore my ryght redoubted lord I
pray almighty god to saue the kyng our souerain lord ʒ
to gyue him grace to yssue as a kynge ʒ tabounde in all

¹ Here the French has only "Il nest au Jour Duy nulle chose qui tant grieue Rome ne ytalie comme fait le college les notaires publiques Car ils ne sont mie aun accost ensemble."

Excerpt 1

For. there is no thyng at this day Folio 42 r.
l. 8.
 that so moche greueth rome and Italie as doth the college
 of notaryes and aduocates publique / for they ben not of
 one accorde. Alas and in Engelond what hurte doon the
 aduocates men of lawe and attorneyes of court to the co-
 myn peple of the royame as wel in the spirituel lawe as
 in the temporalle. how torne they the lawe and statutes
 at their plesure / how ete they the peple / how empouere they
 the comynthe, I suppose that in alle cristendom are not so
 many pletars attorneyes and men of the lawe as been in
 englond onely. for yf they were nombrid alle that longe
 to the courtes of the chaunserye kynge benche comyn
 place cheker / ressayt / and helle / and the bagge berars of
 the same / hit shold amounte to a grete multitude. And
 how al thysse lyue and of whom / yf hit shold be vttrid and
 tolde / hit shold not be beleuyd for they entende to theyr syn
 gular wele and prouffyt and not to the comyn /

Excerpt 2

Alas what Folio 71 v.
l. 24.
 habundance was somme tymes in the royames, ¶ what
 prosperite / in which was Iustyce. and euery man in his
 offyce contente / how stode the cytees that tyme in worship
 ¶ renome. how was renomede the noble royame of englond
 alle the world dradde hit and spake worshyp of hit. How ||
 hit now standeth and in what habundaunce I reporte me Folio 72 r.
 to them that knowe hit. yf there ben theys wyth in the
 royame or on the see. they knowe that laboure in the roy-
 ame / and sayle on the see / I wote wel the same is grete
 therof / I praye god saue that noble royame ¶ sende good
 trewe and polletique counceyllours to the gouernours of
 the same.

Conclusion.

Thenne late euery man of what Sig. l. 6.
recto.
line 25.
 condycion he be that redyth or herith this litel book redde
 take therby ensaumple to amende hym.

Explicit per Caxton

73, recto.

vertues / ʒ to be assisted with all other his lordes in such
 wyse y^t his noble royaume of Englund may prospere ʒ
 habounde in vertues / and y^t synne may be eschewid iustice
 kepte / the royaume defended good men rewarded malefac
 tours punysshid ʒ the ydle peple to be put to laboure that
 he wyth the nobles of the royaume may regne gloriously ||
 In conquerynge his rightfull enheritaunce / that verray
 peas and charite may endure in bothe his royames / and
 that marchandise may haue his cours in suche wise that
 euery man eschewe synne / and encrece in vertuous occu-
 pacions / Praynge your good grace to resseyue this lityll
 and symple book made vnder the hope and shadowe of
 your noble protection by hym that is your most humble
 seruant / in gree and thanke And I shall praye almighty
 god for your longe lyf ʒ welfare / whiche he preserue
 And sende yow thaccomplishment of your hye noble.
 Ioyous and vertuous desirs Amen :/: Fynysshid the last
 day of marche the yer of our lord god .a. thousand foure
 honderd and-lxxiiii .: .: .:

CAXTON.

C

III

The Dictes or Sayengs of the Philosophres

[First Edition, 1477]

[EPILOGUE]

Simple
illuminated
capital.
73, recto.

Ere endeth the book named the dictes or sayengis
h of the philosophres enprynted, by me william
Caxton at westmestre the yere of our lord .M.
CCCC· Lxxvij. Whiche book is late translated out of
Frenshe into englyssh. by the Noble and puissant lord
Lord Antone Erle of Ryuyers lord of Scales ʒ of the
Ile of wyght, Defendour and directour of the siege apos-
tolique, for our holy Fader the Pope in this Royame of
Englond and Gouvernour of my lord Prynce of Wales
And It is so that at suche tyme as he had accomplysshid
this sayd werke, it liked him to sende it to me in certayn
quayers to ouersee, whiche forwith I sawe ʒ fonde therin
many grete. notable. and wyse sayengis of the philosophres
Accordlyng vnto the bookes made in frenshe whiche I had
ofte afore redd, But certaynly I had seen none in englyssh
til that tyme, And so afterward I cam vnto my sayd
lord ʒ told him how I had red ʒ seen his book, And
that he had don a meritory dede in the labour of the transla-
cion therof in to our englyssh tunge, wherin he had deseruid

III

The Dictes or Sayengs of the Philosophres

[Third Edition, 1489]

[EPILOGUE]

Sig. J. ij. r.

Here¹ endeth the book named the dictes or sayngis of
the philosophers enprynted / by me Wyllm Caxton at
westmestre the yere of our lord. M. cccc. Lxxvij / Whiche bo
ok is late translated out of / frenshe into englyssh / by y^e noble
ʒ puissant lord Antoine Erle of Ryuyers lord of Scales ʒ
of the / Isle of wyght. Defendour and directour of the siege

¹ The printed capital here is erroneously an 'L.'

III

The Dictes or Sayengs of the Philosophres

[Second Edition, 1479]

[EPILOGUE]

Ere endeth the book named the dictes or sayengis h of the philosophres enprynted. by me william Caxton at westmestre the yere of our lord .M. CCCC. Lxxvij. Whiche book is late translated out of Frenshe into englyssh. by the Noble and puissant lord Lord Antone Erle of Ryuyers lord of Scales ʒ of the Jle of wyght, Defendour and directour of the sieg apostolique, for our holy Fader the. Pope in this Royame of Englund and Gouvernour of my lord Prince of Wales And It is so that at suche tyme as he had accomplysshid this sayd werke, it liked him to sende it to me in certayn quayers to ouer see, whiche forthwith I sawe ʒ fonde therin many grete. notable. ʒ wyse sayengis of the philosophres Acordyng vnto the bookes made in frenshe whiche I had ofte afore redd But certaynly I had seen none in english til that tyme, And so afterward I cam vnto my sayd lord ʒ tolde him how I had red ʒ seen his book And that he had don a meritory dede in the labour of the translacion therof in to our english tunge, wherjn he had deseruid a

Simple
illuminated
capital.
74, recto.

Apstolique. for our holy Fader the Pope¹ in this Royame of englund and gouvernour of my lord prince of wales. and It is so that at suche tyme as he had accomplisshid this said werke it liked hym to sende it to me in certayn quayers to ouersee / whiche forthwyth I sawe ʒ fonde thereyn many grete notable. and wyse sayengys of / the philozophres. Accordyng vnto the bookes made in frensh whiche I had ofte a fore red / But certaynly I had seen none in englyssh til that tyme And so afterward I cam vnto my sayd lord / ʒ told hym how I had red ʒ seen his book / And that he had don a meritory dede in the labour of the translacion thereof in to our englyssh tunge wheryn he had deseruid a singular lawde ʒ thank / ʒc. Thenne my sayd lord desired me to ouersee it ʒ

¹ Almost erased in Lambeth copy.

78, verso.

a singuler lawde ꝓ thank ꝓc. Thenne my sayd lord desired me to ouersee it and where as I sholde fynde faute to correcte it / wherein I answerd vnto his lordship, that I coude not amende it, But if I sholde so presume I might apaire it, For it was right wel ꝓ connyg[n]ly¹ made ꝓ translated into right good and fayr english, Notwithstondyng he willed me to ouersee it ꝓ shewid me dyuerce things whiche as him semed myght be left out as diuerce lettres mis siues sent from Alisander to darius and aristotle ꝓ eche to other. whiche lettres were lityl appertinent vnto to dictes || and sayenges aforsayd for as moche as they specifie of other maters And also desired me that don to put the sayd booke in enprinte. And thus obeyng hys request and commaundement I haue put me in deuoyr to ouersee this hys sayd booke and beholden as nyghe as I coude howe It accordeth wyth thorigynal beyng in Frensh. And I fynde nothyng dyscordaunt therin. Sauf onely in the dyctes and sayengys of Socrates. Wherin I fynde that my saide lord hath left out certayn and dyuerce conclusions towchyng women. Wherof I meruaylle that my sayd lord hath not wreton them ne what hath meuyd hym so to do Ne what cause he hadde at that tyme. But I suppose that som fayr lady hath desired hym to leue it out of his booke Or ellys he was amerous on somme noble lady. for whos loue he wold not sette yt in hys booke. or ellys for the ve-

¹ text: *connyguly*

where as I shold fynde faulte to correcte wheryn I answerd vnto his lordship that I coude not amende It But yf I sholde so presume I myght a paire it For it was ryght wel ꝓ connyngly made ꝓ translated into right good ꝓ fayr englyssh / Notwythstondyng he willed me to ouersee it ꝓ shewid me diuerce things whiche as hym semed myght be left out as diuerce lettres¹ mis siues sent from / Alisander to darius ꝓ / Aristotle ꝓ eche to other. whiche lettres were lityl appertinent vnto to dictes and sayenges aforsaid for as moche as they specifie of other maters. and also desired me that don to put the sayd booke in enprinte / And thus obeyng his request ꝓ commaundement I haue put me in deuoir to ouersee this his ||

¹ text: *lettres*

singular lawde ꝓ thank ꝓc. Thenne my said lord desired me to ouersee it and where as I shold fynd faute to correcte it wherein I answerd vnto his lordship, that I coude not amende it But yf I sholde so presume I myght apaire it For it was right wel ꝓ connygly made and translated into right good and fayr englissh, Notwithstandyng he willed me to ouersee it ꝓ shewid me dyuerce thinges whiche as him semed myght be left out as diuerce lettres mis siues sent from Alisander to darius ꝓ aristotle and eche to other. which lettres were lityll appertinent vnto the dycetes || and sayenges aforsayd for as moche as they specifye of 74, verso. other maters, And also desired me that don to put the said booke in enprinte. And thus obeyng his request and commaundement I haue put me in deuoyr to ouersee this his said book and beholden as nygh as I coude howe It accordeth wyth thorigynal beyng in frensh And I finde nothing discordaunt therin. Sauf onely in the dycetes and sayengys of Socrates, Wherin I fynde that my saide lord hath left out certayn and dyuerce conclusions towchyng wymen, Wherof I meruaille that my said lord hath not wretou them. ne what hath meuyd him so to do Ne what cause he hadde at that tyme. But I suppose that som fayre lady hath desired him to leue it out of his booke / Or ellys he was amorous on somme noble lady. for whoos loue he wold not sette it in his book, or ellis for the very affection

said book and behelden as nyghe as I coude howe It accordeth wyth thorigynal beyng in frensh ¶ And I fynde nothing discordaunt therin / sauf onely in the dictes and sayengys of Socrates Wherin I fynde y^t my saide lord haith left out certain and diuerse conclusions towchyng women wherof I meruaille that my said lord hath not wretou them ne what hath meuyth hym so to do / Ne what cause he hadde at that tyme. But I suppose that som fayr lady hath desired hym to leue it out of his booke / Or ellys he was amorous on somme noble lady / for whos loue he wold not sette yt in his book. or ellis for the very affection loue and good wylle that he hath vnto alle ladyes ꝓ. Gentilwomen. he thought that Socrates spared the sothe. And wrote of wo-

Sig. J. ij. v.

ry affeccyon. loue and good wyll that he hath vnto alle ladyes and Gentylwomen. he thought that Socrates spared the sothe. And wrote of women more than trouthe. whyche I can not thinke that so trewe aman ꝓ so noble a Philozophre as Socrates was shold wryte other wyse than trouthe. For If he had made fawte in wryting of women. He ought not ne shold not be beleuyd in hys o-ther dyctes and sayenges. But I apperceyue that my sayd lord knoweth veryly that suche defautes ben not had ne founden in the women born and dwellyng in these partyes ne Regyons of the world. Socrates was a Greke boren in a ferre Contre from hens. Whyche contre is alle of othre condycions than thys is. And men ꝓ women of other nature than they ben here in this contre ||
 74, recto. For I wote wel. of what someuer condicion women ben in Grece. the women of this contre ben right good, wyse, play sant, humble, discrete, sobre, chast, obedient to their husbondis, trewe, secrete, stedfast, euer besy, ꝓ neuer ydle, Attemperat in speking, and vertuous in alle their werkis. or atte leste sholde be soo, For whiche causes so euydent my sayd lord as I suppose thoughte it was not of necessite to sette in his book the saiengis of his Auctor socrates touchyng women But for as moche as I had comandement of my sayd lord to correcte and amende where as I sholde fynde fawte, and other fynde I none sauf that he hath left out these dictes ꝓ

men more than trouthe / whiche I can not thinke that so trewe aman and so noble a Philozophre as Socrates was shold wryte other wyse than trouthe / For If he had made fawte in wry[t]ing¹ of women. he ought not ne shold not be beleuyd in his other dictes and sayenges. But I apperceyue that my sayd lord knoweth veryly that suche defautes ben not had ne founden in the women born ꝓ dwellyng in these parties ne Regions of the world / Socrates was a Greke boren in a ferre contre from hens. Whiche contre is alle of other condicions than this is / A[n]d² men ꝓ women of other nature than they ben here in this contre. For I wote wel of what someuer condicion women ben in Grece the

¹ text: *wryeing*² text: *Aud*

loue and good wylle that he hath vnto alle ladyes and Gentywomen. he thought that Socrates spared the sothe

And wrote of wymen more than trouthe. whiche I can not thinke that so trewe a man ⁊ so noble a Phylosophre as Socrates was sholde write other wyse than truth For If he had made fawte in wryting of wymen. He ought not ne sholde not be beleuyd in his other dictes and sayinges. But I apperceyue that my sayd lord knoweth verly that suche defautes ben not had ne founden in the wymen born and dwellyng in these partyes ne Regyons of the world. Socrates was a Greke boren in a ferre Contre from hens. Whyche contre ys alle of othere condycions than thys is.

And men and wymen of other nature than they ben heere in thys contre || For I wote wel. of what someuer condicion women ben in Grece. the women of this contre ben right good, wyse, play-sant, humble, discrete, sobre, chast, obedyent to their husbondis, trewe, secrete, stedfast, euer besy, ⁊ neuer ydle, Attemperat in speking, and vertuous in alle their werkis. or atte leste sholde be so, For which causes so euydent my sayd lord as I suppose thoughte it was not of necessite to sette in his book the saiengis of his Auctor socrates touchyng women But for as moche as I had comandement of my said lord to correcte and amende where as I sholde fynde fawte, and other fynde I none sauf that he hath lefte out these dictes ⁊

75, recto.

women of this contre ben right good. wyse playsant / humble. discrete / sobre. chast obedyent to their husbondis / trewe. secrete stedfast euer besy / and neuer ydle. Attemperat in spekyng ⁊ vertuous in alle their werkis. or atte leste sholde be soo. For whiche causes so euydent my said lord as I suppose thoughte it was not of necessite to sette in his book || the sayengis of his / Auctor socrates touching women. But for as moche as I had commandement of my sayd lord to correcte ⁊ amende where as I sholde fynde fawte ⁊ other fynde I none sauf that he hath left out these dictes ⁊ saynges of y^e women of Grece. therefore in accomplissing his comandement for as moche as I am not in certayn wheder It was in my lordis cōpye or not. or ellys perauenture that the wynde had

(J. III. r.)

saynges of the women of Grece, Therefore in accomplishing his comandement for as moche as I am not in certayn whether it was in my lordis cople or not or ellis peraventure that the wynde had blowe ouer the leef, at the tyme of translacion of his booke, I purpose to wryte the same saynges of that Greke Socrates, whiche wrote. of the women of grece and nothyng of them of this Royame, whom I suppose he neuer knewe, For if he had I dar plainly saye that he wold haue reserued them in especiall in his sayd dictes Alway not presumyng to put ʒ sette them in my sayd lordes booke / but inthende aparte in the rehersayll of the werkis humbly requiryng al them that shal rede this lytyl rehersayll that yf they fynde ony faulte tarette it to Socrates and not to me whiche wryteth as here after foloweth

Simple
Illuminated
capital.

Ocrates sayde That women ben thapparaylles to
s cacche men, but they take none but them that wil
he poure / or els them that knowe hem not And
he sayde that ther is none so grete empeshement vnto aman ||
74, verso. as Ignoraunce, and women ¶ And he sawe a woman
that bare fyre, of whom he saide that the hotter bare the colder
¶ And he sawe a woman seke. of whom he saide that the
euyll resteth and dwellyth with the euyll ¶ And he sa-
we a woman brought to the Iustyce. and many other wo

blowe ouer the leef. At tyme of translacion of his booke. I purpose to wryte the same saynges of that. Greke. Socrates / whiche wrote of the women of grece ʒ nothing of them of this Royame / whom I suppose he neuer knewe For yf he had I dar pleyntyly saye that he wold haue reserued them in especiall in his sayd dictes Alway not presumyng to put ʒ sette them in my sayd lordes booke. bu[t]¹ intende aparte in the rehersayll of the werkis humbly requiryng all them that shal rede this lytyl rehersayll that yf they fynde any faulte tarette it to. Socrates ʒ not to me whiche wryteth as here after foloweth

¹ text: *due*

saynges of the women of Grece, Therefore in accomplishing his comandement for as moche as I am not in certayn whether it was in my lordis cotype or not. er ellis perauntere that the wynde had blowe ouer the leef, at the tyme of translacon of his booke, I purpose to wryte the same saynges of that Greke Socrates, whiche wrote of the women of grece and nothyng of them of thys Royame, whom I suppose he neuer knewe, For yf he had I dar plainly saye that he wolde haue reserued them inespéciall in his sayd dictes Alway not presumyng to put ʒ sette them in my sayd lordes book, but inthende aparte in the rehersayll of the werkis humbly requiryng all them that shall rede this lytyll reher sayll that yf they fynde ony faulte tarette it to Socrates and not to me whiche wryteth as here after foloweth.

Ocrates sayde That women ben thapparaylles to cacche men, but they take none but them that will be pouer, or ellis them that knowe hem not And he sayd that ther is none so grete empeschement vnto aman || as ignoraunce. and women And he sawe a woman that bare fyre / of whom he saide that the hotter bare the colder And he sawe a woman seke of whom he saide that the euyl restyth and dwellyth with the euill And he sawe a woman brought to the Iustyce. and many other wymen

Simple
illuminated
capital.

75, verso.

SOcrates sayde that women ben thapparaylles to cacche men. but they take none but them that will be pouer / or els them that knowe hem not / and he saide that ther is none so grete empeschement vnto aman as Ignoraunce / and women. And he sawe a woman that bare fyre of whom he saide that the hotter bare the colder And he sawe a woman seke. of whom he sayd that the euyl restith ʒ dwellith with y^e euyl / And he sawe a woman brought to the Justice / ʒ many of women folowed her weping / of whome he sayd y^e euill ben sory ʒ angry bycause the euyl shal perisse / And he sawe a long mayde that lerned to writte / of whom he sayde that me multipliet euyl vpon euill ¶ And he sayd that the Ignoraunce of a man is knowen in thre thinges ||

men folowed her weping, of whome he sayd. the euyl ben sory and angry bicause the euyl shal perishe ¶ And he sawe a long mayde that lerned to wryte / of whom he sayde that me multiplied euyl vpon euyl ¶ And he sayd that the Ignoraunce of a man is knowen in thre thinges That is to wete, Whan he hath no thought to vse reason Whan he can not refrayne hys couetises, And whan he is gouerned by the conceyll of women in that he knoweth that they knowe not ¶ And he sayd vnto hys dyscyples Wylle ye that I enseygne and teche you, howe ye shal mo we escape from alle euyl, And they ansuerd, ye, And thenne he sayde to them, For what someuer thing that it be. kepe you and be wel waar that ye obeye not to women Who ansuerd to hym agayn. And what sayest thou by our good moders ʒ of our susters, He sayde to hem, Suffise you / with that I haue sayd to you. For alle ben semblable in malice ¶ And he sayde, who someuer wyl acquere and gete scyence, late hym neuer put hym in the gouernaunce of a woman ¶ And he sawe a woman that made her fresshe and gaye. to whom he sayd / Thou resemblst the fyre / For the more wode is leyd to the fyre the more wole it brenne / And the gretter is the hete ¶ And on a tyme one axyd hym, What hym semed of women. He ansuerd That the women resemble vnto a Tre called Edelfla ¶ Whyche ys the fayrest tre to beholde and see that may be

75, recto.

(J. IIIj. v.)

That is to wete Whan he hath no thought to vse reason Whan he can not refrayne his couetises / And whan he is gouerned by the counseyl of women in that he knoweth that they knowe not. And he sayd vnto his disciples / wylle ye that I ensigne and teche you / how ye shal mowe escape from al euyl / And they answerd ye. and thenne he sayd to them For what someuer thyng that it be / kepe you ʒ be wel war that ye obeye not to women / who answerd to hym again. ʒ what sayest thou by our good moders ʒ of our susters he sayde to hem / Suffyse you wyth that I haue said to you. for alle ben semblable in malyce. And he said who someuer wil acquere ʒ get science late hym neuer put hym i[n]¹ the go

¹ text: *im*

folowed her wepyng. of whom he sayde. the euyll ben sory ʒ
 angry by cause the euyll shal perisshe. And he saw a long
 mayde that lerned to write, of whom he saide. that me¹ mul-
 tiplied euyll vpon euyll And sayd that the Ignoraun-
 ce of a man is knowen in thre thynges. That is to wete
 When he hath no thought to vse reason When he can not
 refrayne his couetises, And when he is gouerned by
 the conceill of wymen in that he knoweth that they knowe
 not. And he. saide vnto his discyples Wylle ye that I
 enseygne and teche you, howe ye shal mowe escape from
 alle euille And they ansuerd, ye, And thenne he saide
 to them For what someuer thyng that it be. kepe you
 and be wele ware that ye obeye not to women Who ansuerd
 to him agayn And what sayist thou by our good
 moders and of our susters. He saide to hem. Suffise you
 with that I haue sayde to you For alle ben semblable in
 malyce. And he saide. who someuer wyll acquere and
 gete science. late him neuer put him in the gouernaunce
 of a woman. And he sawe a woman that made her fresshe
 and gaye. to whom he sayde Thou resembllest the fyre For
 the more wode is leyde to the fyre the more wole it brenne
 And the gretter is the hete And on a tyme one axid
 him, what him semed of wymen He ansuerd That the
 wymen resemble vnto a Tre called Edelfla Whiche ys ||
 the fayrest tre to be holde and see that may be But within 76, recto.

¹ Note: the copy has 'mē' with the macron in ink.

uernance of a woman / And he sawe a woman that made
 her fresshe and gaye to whom he sayde / Thou resembllest the
 fyre. For the more wode is leyd to the fyre the more wole
 it brenne / And the gretter is the hete / ¶ And on a tyme
 one axid hym. what hym semed of women. He answerd /
 That the women resemble vnto a tree called Edelfla whi-
 che is the fayrest tree to beholde ʒ see that may be. But
 wythin it is full of venym / ¶ And they sayde to hym
 and demaunded wherfore he blamed so women. And that he
 hym self had not comen into this world ne none other
 men also wythoute hem. He answerd. the woman ys lyke
 vnto a tree named Chassoygne / on whiche tree ther ben ma-
 ny thynges sharpe ʒ pryckyng. whiche hurte and pryc-

But wythin it ys ful of venym ¶ And they sayd to hym and demanded wherfore he blamed so women, and that he hym self had not comen into thys world ne none other men also wythoute hem. He ansuerd. The woman ys like vnto a Tre named Chassoygnet. on whyche tre ther ben many thynges sharpe and pryckyng. Which hurte and prycke them that approche vnto hyt. And yet ne uerthelesse that same tre bringeth forth good dates and swete. And they demanded hym, Why he fled from the women. And he ansuerd. For as moche as I see them flee and eschewe the good. and comenly do euyll And a woman sayde to hym. Wylt thou haue any other woman than me And he ansuerd to her Arte not thou ashamed toffre thy self to hym. that demandeth ner desireth the not

Simple
illuminated
capital.

O these ben the dictes ⁊ sayengis of the phylosoph
I re Socrates whiche he wrote in his book, And
certainly he wrote no worse than afore is rehersed
And for asmoche as it is acordaunt. that his dyctes and
sayengis shold be had as wel as others therfore I haue set
te it in thende of this booke, And also somme persones per
aurenture that haue red this booke in frensshe wold haue
arette a grette defaulte in me that I had not do my deuoir
in visiting ⁊ ouerseeyng of my lordes book acording to his
desir, And somme other also happely might haue supposed

ke them that approche vnto hit / ¶ And yet neuerthelesse
that same tree bryngeth forth goo[d]¹ dates and swete /
¶ And they demanded hym why he fled from the women
¶ And he answerd / for as moche as I see them flee and es
chewe the good. and comenly do euyll / ¶ And a wo
man sayde to hym / Wylt thou haue any other woman ||
(J. IIIJ. r.) than me / ¶ And he ansuerd to her Arte not thou ashamed
toffre thy self to hym.that demandeth ner desireth the not /

LO these ben the dictes ⁊ sayengis of the philosophre
Socrates whiche he wrote in his book And certain
ly he wrote no worse than a fore is rehersed. And for asmo
che as it is acordaunt. that his dictes and sayengis shold be

¹ text : goo

it is ful of venym. And they saide to him and demanded wherfore he blamed so wymen. and that he him self had not comen into this worlde ne none other men also with oute hem / He ansuerd. The woman is like vnto a Tre named Chassyognet. on whiche tre ther ben many thinges sharpe and pryckyng. whiche hurte and pryck them that approche vnto hyt / And yet neuerthelesse that same tre bringeth forth goode dates and swete. And they demanded hym. why he fled from the wymen. And he ansuerde For as moche as I see them flee and eschewe the goode and comonly do euill And a woman sayde to him. Wylt thou haue any other woman than me And he ansuerd to her Arte not thou ashamed toffre thy self to him. that demandeth nor desireth the not.

O these ben the dictes ⁊ sayengis of the philosoph
 I re Socrates whiche he wrote in his book And
 certaynly he wrote no worse than afore is rehersed
 And for asmoche as it is acordaunt. that his dyctes and
 sayengis shold be had as wel as others therefore I haue set
 te it in thende of this booke And also somme persones pera
 uenture that haue red thys booke in frensshe wold haue
 arette a grette defaulte in me that I had not do my deuoir
 in visityng ⁊ ouerseying of my lordes book according to his
 desire. And somme other also happely myght haue supposed

Simple
 illuminated
 capital.

had as wel as others therefore I haue sette it in thende of
 this booke / And also somme persones per auenture that ha
 ue red this booke in frensshe wold haue arette a grette defau
 te in me that I had not do my deuoir in vysityng ⁊ ouerse
 yng of my lordes book according to his desir / And somme
 other also happely might haue supposed. that socrates had
 wreton moche more euyll of women than here a fore is spec
 cif[i]ed¹ wherfore in satisfyng of all parties ⁊ also for excuse
 of the sayde socrates I haue sette these saide dictes and say
 engis a parte in thende of this book / to thlentent that yf my
 sayd lord or any other persone what someuer he or she be that
 shal rede or here it. that yf they be not wel plesyd wyth all y^t
 they with a penne race it out or ellys rente the leef out of

¹ text: ciferd

75, verso.

that Socrates had wretton moche more ylle of women than here afore is specified, wherfore in satisfyng of all parties ⁊ also for excuse of the saide socrates I haue sette these saide || dyctes ⁊ sayengis a parte in thende of this booke, to thentent that yf my sayd lord or any other persone what someuer he or she be that shal rede or here it, that If they be not wel plesyd wyth all that they wyth a penne race it out or ellys rente the leef out of the booke / Humbly requyryng and besechyng my sayd lord to take no displaysir on me so presumyng but to pardone where as he shal fynde faulte, and that it plesse hym to take the labour of thenpryntyng in gre ⁊ thanke, whiche gladly haue don my dyligence in thaccomplyshyng of his desire and commandement, In whyche I am bounden so to do for the good reward that I haue resseyuyd of his sayd lordship, Whom I beseche Almighty god tencece and to contynue in his vertuous disposicion in this world, And after thys lyf to lyue euerlastyngly in heuen Amen

¶ Et sic est finis. .*

the booke. Humbly requyryng and beseching my sayd lord to take no displaysir on me so presumyng but to pardone where as he shal fynde faulte. and that it plesse hym to take y^e labour of thenpryntyng in gre and thanke. whiche gladly I haue don my diligençe in thacomp lissyng of his desire and commandement / In whiche I am bounden so to do for the go

that Socrates had wreton moche more ylle of women than here a fore is specified, wherfore in satisfieng of all parties ¶ also for excuse of the saide socrates I haue sette these sayde ¶ dyctes ¶ sayengis a parte in thende of this booke, to thentent 76, verso. that yf my sayd lord or ony other persone what someuer he or she be that shal rede or here it, that If they be not well plesyd with alle that they wyth a penne race it out or ellys rente the leef oute of the booke, Humbly requyryng and besechyng my sayd lord to take no displaysir on me so pre sumyng but to perdone where as he shal fynde faulte, and that it please hym to take the labour of thenpryntyng in gre ¶ thanke, whiche gladly haue don my dyligence in thacompilshyng of his desire and comandement, In whiche I am bounden so to do for the good reward that I haue ressey uyd of hys sayd lordship, Whom I besече Almyghty god tencrece and to contynue in his vertuous disposicion in thys world. And after thys lyf to lyue euerlastyngly in heuen. Amen.

Et sic est finis

Thus endeth thys booke of the dictes and notable wyse sayenges of the phylosophers late translated and drawen out of frenshe into our englisshe tonge by my forseide lord Therle of Ryuers and lord Skales. and by his comandement sette in forme and emprynted in thys manere as ye maye here in thys booke see Whiche was fynished the xvij. day of the moneth of Nouembre. and the seuenteth yere of the regne of kyng Edward the. fourth.

This colophon is taken from a copy of the Second Edition, but is evidently a repetition of the colophon added to the *re-issue* of the First Edition: see its date.

od reward that I haue resseyued of his sayd lordship. Whom I besече Almyghty god tencrece and to continue in his vertuous disposicion in this world. And after this lyf to lyue euer lastyngly in heuen. Amen.

¶ Caxton me fieri fecit.

IV

Moral Prouerbes

[1478]

[EPILOGUE]

4, verso.

Of these sayynges Christyne was aucteuresse¹
 Whiche in makyng hadde suche Intelligence
 That therof she was mireur & maistresse
 Hire werkes testifie the experience
 Jn frenssh language was writenn this sentence
 And thus Englished dooth hit rehers
 Antoin wideuylle therl Ryuers

Go thou lital quayer / and recommaund me
 Vnto the good grace / of my special lorde
 Therle Ryueris. for I haue enprinted the
 At his commandement. folowyng eury worde
 His cople / as his secretaire can recorde
 At Westmestre. of feuerer the . xx . daye
 And of kyng Edward, the . xvij. yere vraye

Enprinted by Caxton
 In feuerer the colde season

¹ Earl Rivers may have been the author of the first of these verses,
 but it is just possible that Caxton wrote both.

V

The Historie of Jason

[1477]

[PROLOGUE]

Simple
 illuminated
 capital.
 2, recto.

f Or asmoche as late by the comaundement of the right
 hye J noble princesse my right redoubted lady, My
 lady Margarete by the grace of god Duchesse of Bour-
 goyne Brabant Jc. I translated aboke out of frensshe in
 to Englishsh named Recuyel of the histories of Troye in
 whiche is comprehended how Troye was thries destroyed

And also the labours ⁊ histories of Saturnus Tytan, Jubyter Perseus and Hercules, ⁊ other moo therein Rehersted. but as to the historie of Iason, towchyng the conqueste of the golden fiese, myn auctor hath not sett in his boke. but breuely and the cause is for asmoche as he hadde made before aboke of the hoole lyf of Iason. whyche he presented vnto the noble Prynce in his dayes Philippe Duc of bourgoyne / And also the sayde boke shulde haue ben to grete. if he had sett the saide historie in his boke. for it conteyneth thre bokes beside thistorie of Iason. Therne for as moche as this sayd boke is late newe made aparte of alle thistories of the sayd Jason ⁊ the historie of him whiche that Dares Frigius ⁊ Guido de columpnys wrote in the begynnyng of their bokes, touchyng the conqueste of the sayd golden fiese. by occasion whereof grewe the cause of the seconde destruccion of the sayd cite of troye. is not sett in the sayd boke of Recuyel of thistories of Troye, Therefor vnder the proteccion ⁊ suffraunce of the most hyghe puisant ⁊ Cristen kyng. my most dradde naturel liege Lord Edward by the grace of god kyng of england and of Fraunce and lord of Jrland, I entende to translate the sayd boke of thistories of Iason. folowyng myn auctor as nygh as I can or may not chaungyng the sentence. ne || presumyng to adde ne mynusshe ony thing otherwyse than 2, verso. myne auctor hath made in Frensshe, And in somoche as the grettest fame ⁊ renomme standeth ⁊ resteth in the conquest of the fiese of gold, where of is founded an ordre of knightes. wherof oure sayd souerayne lord is one ⁊ hath taken the profession therof, howe well somme persones afferme and saye that the sayd ordre hath taken his orygyual of the fiese of Gedeon. where in I will not dispute. But well wote I that the noble Duc Philippe firste foundeur of this sayd ordre, dyd doo maken a chambre in the Castell of Hesdyn, where in was craftyly and curiously depeynted the conqueste of the golden fiese by the sayd Iason, in whiche chambre I haue ben and seen the sayde historie so depeynted. ⁊ in remembraunce of medea ⁊ of her conyng ⁊ science. he had do make in the sayde chambre by subtil engyn that whan he wolde it shuld seme that it lightend ⁊ then thondre, snowe ⁊ rayne. And all within the sayde

CAXTON.

D

s, recto.

chambre as ofte tymes ¶ whan it shuld please him. which was al made for his singuler pleasir. Thenne for the honour ¶ worship of our sayd moost redoubted liege lorde whiche hath taken the sayde ordre, I haue vnder the shadowe of his noble proteccion enterprised taccomplish this sayd lital boke not presumyng to presente it vnto his highnesse. for asmoch as I doubte not his good grace hath it in frensh, which he wel vnderstandeth but not displesing his most noble grace I entende by his licence ¶ congye ¶ by the supportacion of our most redoubted liege lady, most excellent princesse the Quene to presente this sayde boke vnto the most fayr and my moost redoubted yong lorde. My lord Prynce of Wales || our tocomyng souerayne lorde whom I praye god saue and encrease in vertue ¶ bryng him vnto asmoche worship and good Renomme as euer had ony of his noble progenytours To thentent, he may begynne to lerne rede Englissh. not for ony beaute or good Endyting of our englissh tonge that is therin. but for the nouelte of the histories whiche as I suppose hath not be had bifore the translacion herof Moost humblie besekyng my sayd most drad souerayn ¶ naturel liege lorde the kyng and also the Quene to pardon me so presumyng. And my sayd tocomyng souerayne lord / My lord the Prynce to receyue it in gree ¶ thanke of me his humble subgiett ¶ seruaunte. and to pardone me of this my simple and Rude translacion, and all other that luste to rede or here it, to correcte where as they shalle finde defaulte

¶ Here endeth the prologue of the translatur.

At end of the "prologue of thauctor"

¶ Thus endeth myn Auctor his prologe / And how wel that hit is sayd afore this prologe that Eson was sone to Cacus Yet bochace saith in the Genelagye of goddes that he was sone to Erictheus the xxix sone of Iupiter / As ye may see more playnly in the xiiij book of the Genelagye of goddes the xxiiij Chapytre

[EPILOGUE]

¶ here endeth myn auctor his booke. . . 149, recto.
l. 10.
Simple
Illuminated
capital.
 a Nd howe be it that myn auctor writeth that he hath
 founde nomore of thistorie of Iason / yet haue I founden
 ¶ red in the boke that bochace made of the genelagie of goddes
 in his .xiiij. boke / that whan so was that Iason ¶ medea
 were reconciled agayn to geder after that shee fled from ege-
 on that he went with her into colchos aga[in]¹ / ¶ whan he was
 comen theder. he founde the olde king oetes fader vnto medea
 bannised ¶ exiled out of his royaume / whom he restored ¶ sette
 him by his valiaunce ¶ puissaun[c]e² in his kingdom agayn / ¶
 after went into asie / where he had victorie in many batailes
 And made so many conquestes with grete magnificence
 in somoche that he was honoured ¶ worshipped for a god / ¶
 were made ¶ edefied diuerce temples in his name which af-
 ter were destroyed by the commandment of king Alexander
 of macedone / who perauenture had enuye of his glorie ¶ also
 he saith that thoant ¶ euneus where his sones whom he begate
 on ysiphile as he went to colchos where as Stacius saith
 Whiche were boren at ones. And for asmoch as it was
 not the custome in lenos to fede ¶ norisse the men children
 they were sent into an other countrey for to be nourysshed ||
 wherefore the moder was put out of her Royaume. ¶ taken 149, verso.
 with pirates and theues. ¶ after sold vnto Lygurgis king
 of neme. and after whan the sayde sones waxe men they
 went with king Adrastus vnto the bataile of Thebes / ¶ as
 they went into the wode of neme they herde of the sayd king
 Adrastus reherse her burth ¶ the caas of her moder / by which
 rehersayll they knew that she was their moder / ¶ in kyng
 Lygurgis court they fonde her / whenne Opheltis his sone
 was founde dede in the gardyn / what time the lady that hadde
 charge of him went with the grekes to shew him the water
 as in the siege of thebes it is more plainly shewd / but what
 cam afterward of these two sones it is incertayn this saith
 bochace in the .xiiij. boke of the geneolagye of goddes. And
 he saith he had an other sone whos name was philemelus /
 and more haue I not red of the noble Iason / but this haue

¹ text: *agam*² text: *puissants*

I founden more thenne myn auctor reherceth in his boke / ʒ ther fore I make here an ende of this storie of Iason. whom diuerce menn blame because that he left ʒ repudied Medea / but in this present boke ye may see the euydent causes / why he so dyd. Praying my said lorde Prince taccepte ʒ take yt in gree of me his indigne seruiteur. whom I beseeche god almighty to saue ʒ encrece in vertu now in his tendre iongth that he may come vnto his parfait eage to his honour and worship that his Renomme maye perpetuelly be remembrid among the most worthy. And after this present life euer-lastinglife in heuen who grant him ʒ vs that boughte vs with his bloode blessyd Ihus Amen

VI

The Consolacion of Philosophie

[1478]

[EPILOGUE]

t Hus endeth this boke which is named the boke of Consolacion of philosophie whiche that boecius made for his comforte and consolacion he beyng in exile for the comyne and publick wele hauyng grete heuynes ʒ thoughtes and in maner of despayr / Rehercing in the sayde boke how Philosophie appiered to him shewyng the mutabilite of this transitorie lyfe / and also enformyng howe fortune and happe shold bee vnderstonden / with the predestynacion and prescience of God as moche as maye and ys possible to be knowen naturelly / as a fore ys sayd in this sayd boke / Whiche Boecius was an excellent auctor of dyuerce bookes craftely and curiously maad in prose and metre / And also had translated dyuerce bookes oute of Greke into latyne / and had ben senatour of that noble ʒ famous cite Rome. And also his two sones Senatours for their prudence ʒ wisdom. And for as moche as he withstode to his power the tyrannye of the odorik thenne Emperour / ʒ wold haue defended the sayde cite ʒ Senate from his wicked hondes / wherupon he was conuict ʒ putte in prison / in whiche prisone he made this forsaide boke of conso

98, recto.
l. 7.

lacion for his singuler comfort, and for as moche as the stile of it, is harde ʒ difficile to be vnderstonde of simple persones|| Therefore the worshipful fader ʒ first foundeur ʒ enbelissher of ornate eloquence in our englissish. I mene, Maister Geffrey Chaucer hath translated this sayd werke oute of latyn in to oure vsual and moder tonge. Folowyng the latyn as neygh as is possible to be vnderstande. wherein in myne oppynyng he hath deseruid a perpetuell lawde and thanke of al this noble Royame of Englund, And in especiall of them that shall rede ʒ vnderstande it. For in the sayd boke they may see what this transitorie ʒ mutable worlde is And wherto euery manʒ liuyng in hit, ought to entende. Thenne for as moche as this sayd boke so translated is rare ʒ not spred ne knowen as it is digne and worthy. For the erudicion and lernyng of suche as ben Ignoraunt ʒ not knowyng of it, Atte requeste of a singuler frende ʒ gossib of myne. I william Caxton haue done my debuoir ʒ payne tenprynte it in fourme as is here afore made, In hopyng that it shal prouffite moche peple to the wele ʒ helth of their soules, ʒ for to lerne to haue and kepe the better pacience in aduersitees, And furthermore I desire ʒ requi. re you that of your charite ye wold praye for the soule of the sayd worshipful manʒ Geffrey Chaucer, first translatour of this sayde boke into englissish ʒ enbelissher in making the sayd langage ornate ʒ fayr. whiche shal endure perpetually. and therefore he ought eternally to be remembrid. of whom the body and corps lieth buried in thabbay of Westmestre beside london to fore the chapele of seynte benet. by whos sepulture is wretton on a table hongyng on a pylere his Epitaphye maad by a poete laureat. wherof the copye foloweth ʒc. ||

Then follows in Type No. 3

Epitaphium Galfridi Chaucer. per
poetam laureatum Stephanum Surigonum
Mediolanensem in decretis licenciatum

94, recto.

After 30 lines of which come the lines

Post obitum Caxton voluit te viuere cura
Willelmi. Chaucer clare poeta tuij
Nam tua non solum compressit opuscula formis
Has quoque suas laudes. iussit hic esse tuas

94 verso.
1. 7.

VII

Cordiale

[1479]

[EPILOGUE]

76, verso,
l. 2.
Simple
illuminated
capital.

His book is thus translated out of frenshe into
 t our maternal tonge by the noble and vertuose
 lord ANTHOINE Erle Ryuiers, Lord Scales ʒ
 of the Isle of wight. Defenseur and directeur of the cau
 ses apostolique for our holy fader the Pope in this Roya
 me of Englonde. Vncle ʒ governour to my lorde prince of
 wales. which book was deliuered to me WILLIAM CAXTON
 by my saide noble lorde Ryuiers on the day of purification
 of our blissid lady, fallyng the tewsday the secunde day
 of the moneth of feuerer. Jn the yeer of our lord. M.
 CCCC lxxviij for to be enprinted / and so multiplied
 to goo abrood emonge the peple / that therby more surely
 myght be remembered the four last thingis vndoubtably co
 myng. And it is to be noted that sythen the tyme of
 the grete tribulacion and aduersite of my saide lord / he
 hath been ful vertuously occupied / as in goyng of pilgre
 magis to SEINT JAMES IN GALICE. to ROME. to
 SEINT BARTYLMEW. to SEINT ANDREW. to SEINT
 MATHEW. in the ROYALME OF NAPLES. and to SEINT
 NICHOLAS DE BAR IN PUYLE. and other diuerse holy pla
 ces. Also hath procured and gotten of our holy fader the
 Pope a greet and a large Indulgence and grace vnto the
 chapel of our lady of the piewe by SEINT STEPHENS at WEST
 NESTRE for the relief and helpe of cristen sowles passed out of
 this transitorie world. which grace is of like vertue to
 thindulgence of SCALACELI. And not withstanding the
 greet labours ʒ charges Þ^t he hath had in the seruice of the||
 kyng ʒ of my said lord prince / as wel in wales as in Eng
 londe. which hath be to him no litle thought ʒ besines bothe
 in spirite and in body / as the fruit th[erof] ¹ experimently she
 weth. Yet ouer that tenriche his vertuous disposicion / he
 hath put him in deuoyr at all tymes whene he might haue a

77, recto.

¹ text: *thrrrof*

leyser. whiche was but startemele to translate diuerse booke out of frensh into english. Emong other passid thurgh myne honde the booke of the wise sayinges or dictes of philosophers. ¶ the wise ¶ holsome prouerbis of Christine¹ of pyse set in metre. Ouer that hath made diuerse balades ayenst the seuen dedely synnes. Furthermore it semeth that he conceiueth wel the mutabilite and the vnstabilenes of this present lyf. a[n]d² that he desireth with a greet zele and spirituall loue our goostly helpe and perpetuel saluacion. And that we shal abhorre and vterely forsake thabhominable and dampnable synnes. whiche comunely be vsed now a dayes / as Pride / periurye / terrible swering thefte / murdre / and many other. Wherefore he took vpon hym the translating of this present werke named **CORDY ALE** / trusting that bothe the reders and the herers therof sholde knowe them self hereafter the better / and amende thair lyuyng or they departe and lose this tyme of grace to the recouure of their saluacion. Whiche Translating in my Iugement is a noble ¶ a meritorious dede. Wherefor he is worthy to be greetly commended. and also singularly remembred with our goode prayers. For certaynely as well the reders as the herers well conceuyng in their hertes the forsaid foure last things may therby greetly be prouoqued and called from sinne to the greet ¶ plentiouse || mercy of our blissid saueour / whiche mercy is aboue all his werkis. And noman beyng contrite and confessed nedeth to fere thobteynng therof / as in the preface of my saide lordes booke made by hym more playnly it appereth Thenne in obeying and folowyng my said lordes comandement. In whiche I am bounden so to do. for the manifold benefetes and large rewardes of hym had and receuyed of me vnderuid. J haue put me in deuoyr tacomplisshe his saide desire and comaundement / whom I beseche almighty god to kepe and mayntene in his vertuous and laudable actes and werkis. And sende hym thaccomplishment of his noble and ioyous desirs and playsirs in this worlde And after this short daungerous and transitory lyf euer lasting permanence in heuen Amen. Whiche werke present I beganne the morne after the saide Purificacion of our

77, verso.

¹ text: *xpristine*² text: *and*

blissid Lady. Whiche was the¹ daye of **SEINT BLASE**
 Bissshop and Martir. And finissed on the euen of than
 nunciacion of our said bilissid Lady fallyng on the wed
 nesday the xxiiij daye of **MARCHE**. Jn the xix yere of
KYNG EDWARDE the fourthe

¹ text: the the

VIII

Description of Britayne

[1480]

[PROLOGUE]

1, recto.

¶ Hit is so that in many and diuerse places the comyn cronicles
 of englond ben had and also now late enprinted at Westmynstre
 And for as moche as the descripcion of this londe whiche of olde
 tyme was named albyon and after Britayne is not descriued
 ne comynly had,ne the noblenesse and worthynesse of the same is
 not knowen / Therfor J entende to sette in this booke the discripcion
 of this said Jsle of Britayne with the commoditees of the same
Followed by Contents.

[EPILOGUE]

80 verso,
l. 13.

Here endeth het descripcion of Britayne the , whiche conteyneth en
 glond wales and scotland , ʒ also bicause Irlonde is vnder the reu
 le of englond ʒ of olde tyme it hath so continued therefore J haue
 sette the descripcion of the same after the said brituyne, which J ha
 ue taken oute of Policronicon , And bicause it is necessarie to alle
 englisshmen to knowe the propretees commoditees ʒ meruailles of
 them , therefore J haue sette them in enprunte according to the trans
 lacion of Treuisa , which atte request of the lord Barkeley trans
 lated the book of Policronicon in to englissh , Fynysshed by me
 William Ca[x]ton¹ the xviiij. day of August the yere of our lord god
 M. CCCC. xxx. and the xx. yere of the regne of kyng Edward
 the fourthe.

¹ text: *Cadton*

IX

Tullius of Olde Age

[1481]

[PROHEMYE]

h Ere begynneth the prohemye vpon the reducyng, Sig. 1, 2.
recto.
 both out of latyn as of frensshe in to our englyssh
 tongue / of the polytyque book named TULLIUS DE SENEC-
 TUTE. whiche that TULLIUS wrote vpon the disputacions ⁊
 commynycacions made to the puissaunt duc CATO senatour
 of rome by SCIPION ⁊ LELIUS theene beyng yong noble
 knyghtes ⁊ also senatours of the said rome / of the wor-
 shippe, recommendacyon ⁊ magnyfyccence. that shold be gy-
 uen to men of olde age / for theyr desertes ⁊ experyence in
 wysedom of polytyque gouernaunce ⁊ blamed them that re-
 prouen or lothen olde age / ⁊ how CATON exhorteth ⁊ counseil-
 leth olde men to be Ioyeful, and bere pacyently olde age
 whan it cometh to them, And how TULLIUS at reuerence
 of CATON declareth by waye of example. how ENNEUS
 thauncyent philosophre purposeth and wryteth in thre ver-
 ses compendiously vnto his frende ATTITUS also a sena-
 tour of Rome, how he toke grete thought and charge for
 the gouernaunce of the comyn prouffygth, ffor whiche
 he deserued grete lawde and honoure in preferringg the
 same named in latyn RES PUBLICA keypyng the Ro-
 maynes prosperous / ⁊ defendyng them fro theyr aduersa-
 ryes and rebelles, whiche book was translated and
 thystoryes openly declared by the ordenaunce ⁊ desyre of
 the noble Auncyent knyght SYR JOHAN FASTOLF of
 the countee of NORFOLK banerette. lyuyng the age of
 four score yere. excercisyng the warrys in the Royame
 of Fraunce and other countrees / ffor the diffence and
 vnyuersal welfare of bothe royames of englond and
 ffrance by fourty yeres enduryng, the fayte of armes ||
 hauntyng. And in admyhstryng Iustice and polytyque
 gouernaunce vnder the kynges. that is to wete HENRY
 the fourth. HENRY the fyfthe. HENRY the syxthe, And
 was gouernour of the duchye of ANGEOU and the coun-
 tre of MAYNE. Capytayn of many townys. Castellys

Signature
1, 2. verso.

and fortressys in the said Royame of ffrance / hauyng the charge and saufigarde of them dyuerse yeres. occupyeng and rewlyngre thre honderd speres and the bowes acustomed thenne / And yeldyng good acompt of the forsaid townes castellys ⁊ fortresses to the seyde kynges and to theyr lyutenanutes, Prynces of noble recomendacion, as JOHAN regent of ffrance Duc of Bedforde THOMAS duc of excestre, THOMAS duc of clarence ⁊ other lyutenanutes / prayeng to take this reducyng pacyently, ⁊ submytting me to the amending ⁊ correction of the reder and vnderstoder / that is disposed to rede or haue ony contemplacion in thystories of this book, whiche were drawen and compyled out of the bookes of thauncyent phylosophers of Grece, As in thorygynal text of TULLIJ DE SENECTUTE in latyn is specyficed compendiously / whiche is in maner harde the texte. But this book reduced in Englyssh tongue / is more ample expowned and more swetter to the reder kepyng the luste sentence of the latyn /

Henne for as moche as this book thus reduced t in to our englyssh. is with grete instance labour ⁊ coste comen in to myn honde which I aduysedly || haue seen, ouer redde / and considered the noble. honeste / and uertuous mater necessarily requysite vnto men stepte in age / and to yong men for to lerne / how they ought to come to the same, to whiche euery man naturrelly desyreth to atteyne, And the mater and commynycacion of this said book bytwene that wyse and noble man CATO / ou that one parte / and Scipio and Lelius two yonge knyghtes on that other parte. is moche behoefful to be knowen to euery man. vertuous ⁊ wel disposed of what some euer eage resonable that he be. Thenne by cause I haue not seen ony of the same here to fore. I haue ende-¹[v]oured me to gete it with grete difficulte, and so goten / haue put it in enprynte ⁊ dilygently aftir my lital vnderstandyng corrected it / to thentente / that noble / vertuous and wel disposed men myght haue it to loke on ⁊ to vnderstonde it. And this book is not requysyte ne eke con-

¹ text: *ende-noured*

uenyent for euery rude and symple man. whiche vnderstandeth not of science ne connyng. and for suche as haue not herde of the noble polycye / and prudence of the Romaynes / but for noble, wyse / ʒ grete lordes gentilmen ʒ marchauntes that haue seen ʒ dayly ben occupied in maters towchyng the publyque weal, And in especial vnto them that passed theyr grene yongthe / and eke theyr myddle eage callyd virylyte / and ben approchid vnto senectute callyd olde and auneyent eage. wherin they may see how to suffre ʒ bere the same pacyently. and what surete ʒ vertue ben in the same / And haue also cause to be ioyous ʒ glad, that they haue escaped and passed the manyfolde perylls ʒ doubteuous aduentures that ben in Iuente ʒ yongthe / as in this said booke here folowyng ye may more playnly see. whiche booke endyted ʒ wrote in latyn, the noble philosopher and prynce of Eloquence TULLIUS Consul Romayn. within the breste of whom / Phylosophye naturel and morall had chosen her domycill Out of whiche it hath ben translated in to frensh and aftir in to our Englyssh tongue. as hier aftir al a longe ye may see,

Signature
1, 3. verso.

Lso whan the said TULLIUS had made his
a book de senectute. he aftir made another book callid de amicia. that is to saye of frendship

In which he reherceth of two yong knyghtes of Rome that one named Seuola. and that other Faunys, bothe sones in lawe vnto Lelius a noble Senatour of Rome. and felawe and alyed in frendship with Scipio Affrycan, whiche within fewe dayes to fore was deed. How they desyred to knowe of the frendship that was bytwene the said Scipio whyles he lyued / ʒ Lelius theyr said fader in lawe, And of the disputacion in frendship, as alle playnly it appiereth in the same, which book was translated by the vertuuous and noble Erle therle of wurcestre in to our englyssh tongue / And by cause it is accordyng / and requysyte to haue frendship Ioyned to olde eage / I haue enprynted the said book of frendship and annexed it to the book of eage. which book of frendship is ful necessary ʒ behoefful vnto euery estate ʒ degree

Fig. 1. 4.
recto.

ʒ aftir I haue sette in this said book folowyng them bothe a noble treatys of the declamacion of two noble knyghtes || Romaynes in makyng of two oracions to fore the Senate to knowe wherin noblesse resteth. And thus this volume is dyuyded in to thre particuler werkes. whiche ben of grete wysedom in olde age / very loue in frendship. And the question wherin noblesse resteth, whiche lytil volume I haue emprysed tenpnynte vnder the vmbre and shadowe of the noble proteccion of our moost dradde, souerayn and naturel lyege lord / and moost Cristen kyng kyng Edward the fourth, to whom I moste humbly byseche to receyue the said book of me William Caxton his moost humble subget and litil seruant / and not to dedeyne to take it of me so poure ignoraunt ʒ symple a persone. And of his moost bountynous grace to pardonne me so presumyng, beschyng Almyghty god to kepe mayntene / and graunte to hym longe lyf and prosperous and thaccomplysshement of his hye and noble desyres. And aftir this short and transitorye lyf euirlastyng lyf and Ioye in heuen. Amen :

Colophon.

Fig. 1 3.
recto. l. 4.

Thus endeth the boke of Tulle of olde age translated out of latyn in to frenshe by laurence de primo facto at the comaundement of the noble prynce Lowys Duc of Burbon / and enpnynted by me symple persone William Caxton in to Englysshe at the playsir solace and reuerence of men growyng in to olde age the xij day of August the yere of our lord. M.CCCC. lxxxj :

X

Tullius of Frendship

[1481]

[PROLOGUE]

Fig. a 1.
recto.

Here foloweth the said Tullius de Amicicia translated in to our maternall Englyssh tongue by the noble famous Erle, The Erle of wurcestre sone ʒ heyer to the lord typ-

toft, which in his tyme flowred in vertue / ʒ cunningg, to whom I knewe none lyke emonge the lordes of the temporalite in science ʒ moral vertue, I besече almyghty god to haue mercy on his sowle / ʒ praye al them that shal here or rede this lityl treatys moch vertuous of friendship in like wise of your charyte to remembre his soule emong your prayers, And by cause this werke was made by the prince of Eloquence Tullius intituled de Amycicia afftir that he had acheuid his boke de senectute, as hertofore ye maye more playnly see at large / theñne me semeth it requisite ʒ necessarye that I sette in folowing the said book / this book de Amicicia / whiche by goddes grace shal playnly folowe

[EPILOGUE]

Thus endeth this boke named Tullius de Amicicia, whiche treateth of frendship vtterid and declared by a noble senatour of Rome named LELYUS vnto his two sones in lawe also noble men of rome named FAUUYUS ʒ SEUOLA. In which they desyred hym to enforme them of the frendship / that was bytwene the said LELIUS and the noble prynce SOPIO AFFRICAN. wherin he hath answered ʒ tolde to them the noble vertues that ben in frendship And withoute vertue veray frendship may not be. as he preunth by many exsamples and notable conclusions as here to fore is moch playnly expressyd ʒ said all a longe / whiche werke was translated by the vertuous and noble lord and Erle / therle of worcestre. on whoos sowle I bechese almyghty god to haue mercy, And Alle ye that shal rede or here this said werke of your charyte I besече you to praye for hym. And by cause this said book de Amicicia is ful necessarye and requysyte to be had and knowen. I haue putt it in emprynte, to thentent, that veray Amyte and frendship may be had || as it ought to be in euery estate and degree / And vertue withoute whiche frendship may not be had may be encreaced. and vices eschewid Thenne whan I had enprynted the book of olde age, which the said Tullyus made / me semed it acordyng that this said booke of frendship shold folowe by cause / ther can not be annexed to olde age

Fig. d 4.
recto. l. 7.

Signature
d 4. verso.

a bettir thyng / than good and very frendship. which two said boke here to fore wretton ben of grete wisdom and auctoryte / And full necessarye behoeffull and requysite vnto euery age estate and degree / And that they prouffyte in increacyng of vertue, I besече the blessyd Trynyte to geue and graunte vnto alle them that shal rede ʒ here these boke / And so to flee ʒ eschewe vices ʒ synnes / that by the merytes of vertuose honeste, and good werkes, we may atteyne aftir this shorte, transytorye lyf the eternall blessyd lyf in heuen / where is ioye and glorie withoute ende. Amen.

 XI

The Declamacion of Noblesse

[1481]

[EPILOGUE]

Thus endeth thoracion of GAYUS FLAMMYNEUS

 Sig. f 7.
 verso. l. 23.

 (Sig. f 8.)
 recto.

As touchyng the sentence dyffynytyf gyuen by the Senate aftir these two noble knyghtes had purposed and shewed theyr Oracions I fynde none as yet pronounced ne gyuen, of whiche myn auctour maketh ony mencion of in his booke / Thenne I wolde demaunde of theym that shal rede or here this booke. whiche of this twayne that is to saye CORNELIUS SCIPIO AND GAYUS FLAMMYNEUS was moost noble. And in whiche of theym bothe. aftir the contente of theyr oracions that noblesse resteth And to hym Iuge ye this noble and vertuous lady Lucretia to be maryed, And here I make an ende of this mater for this tyme / Prayeng and requyryng all theym that in this said werke shal haue ony playsyre / that ye wil remembre hym that translated it in to our maternal and Englyssh tongue / And not only this said werke but the booke of TULLIUS DE AMICICIA here to fore enprynted whi[c]h¹ treateth so wel of frendship ʒ amyte, I mene the right vertuous and noble Erle. Therle of wurces-

¹ text: *whith*

tre / whiche late pytously lost his lyf, whos soule I recom-
 mende vnto youre special prayers. and also in his tyme
 made many other vertuouus werkys, whiche I haue herd
 of! O good blessyd lord god. what grete losse was it of
 that noble vertuouus and wel disposed lord, whan I re-
 membre and aduertise his lyf, his science. and his ver-
 tue, me thynketh god not displesyd. ouer grete a losse of
 suche a man, consydering his estate and conning. And
 also theexercise of the same. with the grete laboures in
 gooyng on pylgremage vnto Iherusalem visytyng there
 the holy places. that oure blessyd lord Jhesu Criste halo-
 wed [w]ith¹ his blessyd presence. And shedyng there his
 precious blood for oure redempcion. And from thens
 ascended vnto his fader in heuen. And what worship had
 he at Rome in the presence of our holy fader the pope.
 And so in alle other places vnto his deth, At whiche||
 deth euery man that was there. myght lerne to dye and
 take his deth paciently / wherin I hope and doubte not / but
 that god receyued his soule in to his euirlastyng blysse
 ffor as I am enformed he ryght aduysedly ordeyned alle
 his thynges as well for his last will of wordly goodes
 as for his sowle helthe. ʒ paciently and holyly without
 grudchyng in charyte to fore that he departed out of this
 world / whiche is gladsom and Ioyous to here, Thenne I
 here recomende his sowle vnto youre prayers, and also
 that we at our departyng maye departe in suche wyse, that
 it maye please our lord god to receyue vs in to his euir-
 lastyng blysse. Amen :

Sig. f. 8.
verso.

EXPLICIT PER CAXTON.

¹ text: *thith*

XII

Godefroy of Bologne

[1481]

[EPILOGUE]

Sig. 176.
verso l. 34.Sig. 176.
recto.

Thus endeth this book Jntitled the laste siege and conquest of Jherusalem with many other historyes therin comprysed / Fyrst of Eracles / and of the meseases of the cristen men in the holy londe / And of their releef ʒ conquest of Jherusalem / and how Go deffroy of boloyne was first kyng of the latyns in that royaume ʒ of his deth. translated ʒ reduced out of ffre[n]sshe¹ in to englysshe || by me symple persone Wylliam Caxton to thende that euery cristen man may be the better encoraged tenterprise warre for the defense of Cristendom. and to recouer the sayd Cyte of Jherusalem in whiche oure blessyd sauour Jhesu Criste suffred deth for al mankynde. and roose fro deth to lyf / And fro the same holy londe ascended in to heuen. And also that Cristen peple one vnyed in a veray peas / myght empryse to goo theder in pylgramage with strong honde for to expelle the sarasyns and turkes out of the same that our lord myght be ther seruyd ʒ worshipped of his chosen cristen peple in that holy ʒ blessyd londe in which he was Jncarnate and blissyd it with the presence of his blessyd body whyles he was here in erthe emonge vs / by whiche conquest we myght deserue after this present short and transitorye lyf the celestial lyf to dwelle in heuen eternally in ioye without ende Amen / Which book J presente vnto the mooste Cristen kyng. kyng Edward the fourth. humbly besechyng his hyenes to take no displeayr at me so presumyng. whiche book² J began in marche the xij daye and fynysshyd the vij day of Juyn / the yere of our lord M.CCCC. lxxxij ʒ the xxj yere of the regne of our sayd sauerayn lord kyng Edward the fourth. ʒ in this maner sette in forme ʒ enprynted the xx day of nouembre the yere a forsaid in thabbay of Westmester by the sayd wylliam Caxton

¹ text: *ffreusshe*² text: *boook*

CAXTON.

R

XIII

The Mirroure of the World

[First Edition, 1481]

[PROLOGUE]

[a. 4. recto, Prologue declaryng to whom this book apperteyneth
l. 6.][Square wood-cut of
master and pupils.]

c O n s i d e r y n g
that wordes ben
perisshyng/ vayne/ ʒ
forgeteful/ And wri-
tynges duelle ʒ abi-
de permanent/ as I rede
Vox audita perit/ lit
tera scripta manet/
These thinges haue
caused that the faites

and dedes of Anncyent menn ben sette by declaracion in
fair and Aourned volumes/ to thende that science and
Artes lerned and founden of thinges passed myght be
had in perpetuel memorye and remembraunce/ ffor the
herthes of nobles in eschewyng of ydlenes at suche tyme
as they haue none other vertuouse ocupacion on hande ought
textercise them in redyng/ studyng/ ʒ visytyng the noble
faytes and dedes of the sage and wysemen somtyme tra-
uaillyng in prouffitable vertues/ of whom it happeth ofte

XIII

L'Ymage du Monde¹[Square painting-original
of that in Caxton's edit^a]

Prologue declai,
rant a qui ce vo,
lume appartient
C O n s i d e r a n t
que parolles sont
ʒ demeurent vaines
et escriptures per
manentes ont

¹ (Reg. MS. 19. A. ix.).

XIII

Mirroure of the World

[Second edition, 1490]

[PROLOGUE]

Prologue declaryng to whom this book apperteyneth /

(Sig. a. 11j.
recto.)

[Woodcut.]

C Onsyderyng
that wordes
ben perisshing
vayne. and forgete-
ful / And writynges
duelle / and abyde per
manent / as I rede.
¶ Vox audita perit
littera scripta mauet
¶ Thyse thynges
haue caused that the
faytes and dedes of
Auncyent men. ben

sette by declaracion in fayr ¶ Aourned volumes. to thende
that science / ¶ artes lerned ¶ founden of thinges passed myght
be had in perpetuel memorye ¶ remembraunce / For the hertes of
nobles in eschewyng of Idlenes at suche tyme as they haue
none other vertuose occupacion on hande ought texcersise
them in redyng / studieng / ¶ visytyng þ^e noble faytes ¶ dedes

les fais des anci
ens este mis par
declaracion en

beaulx ¶ aournes volumes Affin que
des sciences acquises et choses passees fust
perpetuelle memoire pour les corps des
nobles excerser en lisant ¶ estudiant
les fais des sages Jadis traueillant en
verteuses prouffitables. Dont il aduient que
les vngs sont enclins a visiter les liures
traitans de sciences particulieres Et les
aultres a visiter les liures parlans

(a 4,
verso.)

that some men ben enclyned to visyte the bookes treatyng of sciences particuler / And other to rede ʒ visyte bookes spekyng of faytes of armes / of loue / or of other meruail- || lous histories / And emonge alle other this present booke whiche is called the ymage or myrrour of the world / ought to be visyted / redde / ʒ knowen / by cause it treateth of the world and of the wondreful dyuision therof / in whiche book a man resonable / may see and vnd[er]stande¹ more clerer by the visytyng and seeyng of it and the figures therin / the situacion and moeuynge of the firmament / and how the vnyuersal erthe hangeth in the myddle of the same / As þ^e chapitres here folowyng shal more clerly shewe and declare to yo[u]² / whiche said booke was translated out of latyn in to ffrensche by the ordynaunce of the noble duc / Johan of Berry and Auuergne the yere of our lord. M.CC.xlv. And now at this tyme rudely translated out of ffrensche in to Englishsh by me symple persone william Caxton / at the request. desire. coste and dispense of the honourable ʒ worshipful man Hugh Bryce Alderman ʒ Cytezeyn of london / entending to present the same vnto the vertuous noble and puissaunt lord / wylliam lord hastynges lord Chamberlayn vnto the most Crysten kynge / kynge Edward the fourthe kynge of England ʒ of ffrance ʒc and lieutenant for the same of the toun of Calais and marches there whom he humbly besecheth to resseyue in gree ʒ thanke /

¹ text : vndrstande² text : you

de fais darmes ʒ damours on aultre ment Et est ce present volume appelle lymage du monde Et fu translate de latin en franchois par le commandement || et ordonnance du noble duc Jehan de berry et Dauuergne lan M. deux cens quarante cinq. Si contient cinquante cinq chapitres et vingt sept figures sans lesquelles il ne porroit estre de legier entendu Et pour le mieulx declarier a este ordonne en trois parties dont le premiere partie contient xiiij chapitres et huyt figures La seconde partie contient

of the sage ⁊ wysemen somtyme trauaillyng in puffytable
 vertues / of whom it happeth ofte that *some* ben enclyned to
 vysite the bookes treatyng of sciences particuler / and other
 to rede ⁊ vysite bookes spekyng of faytes of armes. of lone /
 or other meruayllous historyes / And emonge alle other
 this present book whiche is called the ymage or mirroure of
 the world / ought to be visyted / redde / ⁊ knowen / by cause it
 treateth of the world ⁊ of the wondreful dyuision therof.
 in whiche book a man resonable / may see and vnderstande
 more clerer by the vysytyng and sayeng of it And the fy-
 gures therin / the sytuacion ⁊ moeuyng of the firmament. ||
 ⁊ how the vnyuersal erthe hangeth in the myddle of the sa
 me / As the chapitres here folowyng shal more clerly she-
 we ⁊ declare to you whiche said book was translated out of
 latyn in to frenshe by the ordynauce of the noble duk / Io-
 han of Berry ⁊ Auuergne the yere of our lord. M. CC.
 xlv. And now at this tyme rudely translated out of frens
 she in to Englishsh by me symple persone Wyllm Caxton.
 at the request. desire coste ⁊ dispense of the honourable and
 worshipful man Hugh Bryce alderman and Cytezen of
 londen / entendyng to present the same vnto the vertuons
 noble and puyssaunt Lord wyllm lord hastynges lord Cham-
 berlayn vnto the most Crysten kyng / kyng Edward the
 fourthe kyng of England ⁊ of Fraunce ⁊c. and lieute-
 nant for the same of the toun of Caleys ⁊ marches there
 whom he humbly besecheth to resseyue in gree ⁊ thanke. whi

(Sig. a. iii.
verso.)

xix figures Et la tresre partie est
 de xxij chapitres et ix figures Si fu
 grosse ⁊ de tous poins ordonne comme
 dit est en la ville de bruges lan del
 Incarnation nostre seigneur Ihucrist mil
 quatre cens soixante ⁊ quatre par le
 commandement de Jehan le clerc libra
 rier ⁊ bourgeois dicelle ville de bruges
 priant dieu que tous ceux qui le
 lisront ou orront lire y puissent
 tellement prouffitre que ce soit au prouf
 fit et salut de leurs ames ⁊ a lonneur
 et sante de leurs corps.

whiche booke conteyneth in alle lxx vij chapitres / ʒ xxvij figures / without whiche it may not lightly be vnderstande / And for to declare more openly / it is ordeyned in thre parties / Of whiche the firste conteyneth xx chapitres and viij figures / The seconde partie xxxiiij chapitres, and ix figures / And the therde conteyneth xxiiij chapitres and || . x. figures / whiche was engrossed and in alle poyntes ordeyned by chapitres and figures in ffrenshe in the toun of bruggis the yere of thyncarnacion of our lord. M. CCCC. lxiiij. in the moneth of Juyn / And emprised by me ryght vnable and of lytil connyng to translate ʒ brynge it in to our maternal tongue þ^e second day of the moneth of janyuer the yer of our said lord. M.CCCC lxxx in thabbay of westmestre by london / humbly requyryng alle them that shal fynde faulte / to correcte and amende where as they shal ony fynde / And of suche so fonnden that they repute not the blame on me / but on my copie / whiche j am charged to folowe as nyghe as god wil gyue me grace, whom j most humbly beseche to gyue me scyence connyng and lyf taccomplysshe and wel to fynysse it ʒc /

Sig. a. 5,
recto.

t Henne who so wylle comprise and vnderstande the substance of this present volume / for to lerne and knowe specially the creacion. of this world / the gretnes of the firmament ʒ lytilnes of therthe in regard of heuen / how the vij sciences were ffounden and what they bee / by whiche he may the better auaylle in knowleche alle the dayes of his lyf / Thenne late hym rede this said volume treatably. auisedly. ʒ ordynatly that in suche thing as he shal rede / he suffre nothyng to passe / but that he vnderstonde it right well / And so may he knowe ʒ vnderstonde veritably the declaracion of this said volume / And he thenne that so wille obeye this *commandement* / May by the contente of the same lerne grete partie of the fourme and condicion of this worlde / And how by þ^e wyll of our lord || it was by hym created made and accomplisshed / And the cause wherfor it was establisshid / wherof the debonayr lord hath don to vs so grete grace / that we euer ben bounden to gyue hym lawde and worshyp / or ellys we had not ben

Sig. a. 5,
verso.

che book conteyneth in alle. xxvij. chapitres ʒ. xxvij. fygyres / wythout whiche it may not lyghtly be vnderstande / ʒ for to declare more openly. it is ordeyned in thre partyes. Of whiche the first conteyneth xx. chapitres ʒ viij. fygyres / Te seconde partie xxiiij. chapitres / ʒ ix fygyres / And the therde conteyneth xxiiij / chapitres and x fygyres / whiche was engrossed ʒ in all poyntes ordeyned by chapitres and fygyres in frenshe in the toun of Bruggis the yere of thyncarnacion of our lord. M.CCCC. lxiiij. in the moneth of Iuyn. And emprysed by me right vnable ʒ of lytil connyng to translate ʒ brynge it in our maternal tonge y^e second day of the moneth of Ianyuer the yere of our sayde lord. M.cccc. lxxx / in thabbay of westmestre by londen / humbly requyryng all them that shal fynde faulte. to correcte ʒ amende where as they shall ony fynde / And of suche || so founden that they repute not the blame on me. but on my copie. whiche I am charged to folowe as nyghe as god wyl gyue me grace. whom I most humbly beseche to gyue me science connyng ʒ lyf tacomplysshe ʒ wel to fynysse it ʒc.

Fig. a. liij.
recto.

THenne who so wylle comprise ʒ vnderstande the substance of this present volume. for to lerne ʒ knowe specially the creacion. of this world the gretenes of the firmament and lytylnes of therthe in regard of heuen / how y^e vij. sciences were founden and what they bee / by whiche he may the better anaylle in knowleche alle y^e dayes of his lif Thenne late hym rede this sayd volume treatably / ausedly and ordynatly that in suche thing as he shal rede / he suffre nothyng to passe. but that he vnderstonde it right wel / And so may he knowe and vnderstonde verytably the declaracion of this sayd volume. And he thenne that so wylle obeye this commaundement / May by the contente of the same lerne grete partye of the fourme ʒ condicion of this world ¶ And how by the wyl of our lord it was by him created made ʒ complysshed. And the cause wherfore it was establysshid. wherof the debonayr lord hath don to vs so grete grace. that we euer ben bounden to gyue hym lawde ʒ worship. or ellys we had not ben of ony valew / ne worth ony thyng. nomore than vn[re]sonable¹ beestis / Thenne late vs praye the maker ʒ creatour. of all creatures god almyhty

¹ text: *mersonable*

of ony valew / ne worth ony thyng / nomore than vnresonable beestis / Thenne late vs praye the maker and creatour / of alle cratures god all myghty that at the begynnyng of this book it liste hym of his most bounteous grace to departe with vs of the same that we may lerne / and that lerned to reteyne / ʒ that reteyned so teche / that we may haue so parfyght scyence and knowleche of god / that we may gete therby the helthe of our sowles / and to be partyners of his glorye permanent and without ende in heuen Amen /

PART II, section xiiij^o. [1481]

Sig. g. 4,
verso, l. 7.

(St.
Patrick's
Purgatory.)

hit may wel be that of aunycent tyme it hath ben thus as a fore is wreton as the storye of Tunzdale ʒ other witnesse / but I haue spoken with dyuerse men that haue ben therin / And that one of them was an hie chanon of waterford whiche told me that he had ben therin. v. or. vj. tymes / And he sawe ne suffred no suche thynges / he saith that with procession the Relygious men that ben there brynge hym in to the hool and shette the dore after hym / and than he walketh groping in to it / where as he said ben places and maner of cowches to reste on / And there he was alle the nyght in contemplacion ʒ prayer / and also slepte there / and on the morn he cam out agayn / other while in their slepe somme men haue meruayllous dremes ʒ other thyng sawe he not / And in lyke wyse tolde to me a worshipful knyght of bruggis named sir John de banste that he had ben therin in lyke wyse and see none other thyng but as afore is sayd /

Sig. n. 3,
verso, l. 17.

EPILOGUE.

a Nd where it is so / that I haue presumed and emprised this forsayd translacion in to our engliish and maternal tongue / Jn whiche I am not wel parfyght / And yet lasse in frensshe / yet I haue endeoured me therin / atte request and deayre. coste and dispence of the honorable and worshipful man. Hughe Bryce Cytzeyn and Alderman of london / whiche hath sayd to me that he entendeth to presente it / vnto the puissaunt noble and vertuous lorde / My lorde hastynges. Chamberlayn vnto our

that at the begynnynge of this booke it liste him of his most bounteous grace to departe wyth vs of the same that we may lerne / And that lerned to reteyne / and that reteyned so teche. that we may haue so parfyght science and knowleche of god / that we may gete therby the helthe of our sowles. and to be partyners of his glorye permanent ʒ wythout ende in heuen Amen /

PART II, section xiiij^o. [1490]

hit may wel be that of auneynt tyme it hath ben thus as afore is wretton as the storye of Tundale ʒ other || witnesse / but I haue spoken with dyuerse men that haue ben therin / And that one of them was an hye chanon of waterford whiche told me that he had ben therin v. or vj times ʒ he sawe ne suffred no suche thynges he sayth that wyth processyon the relygyous men that ben there brynge hym in to the hool and shette the dore after hym. ʒ than he walketh groping in to it where as he said ben places ʒ maner of cowches to reste on / And there he was all the nyght in contemplacion ʒ prayer / and also slepte there / ʒ on the morn he cam out agayn / other while in their slepe somme men haue meruayllous dremes ʒ other thynges saw he not / And in lyke wyse tolde to me a worshipful knyght of brudgis named sir John / de banste that he had ben therin in lyke wyse ʒ see none other thyng but as afore is sayd /

Sig. f. 5,
verso, l. 80.Sig. f. 6,
recto.

EPILOGUE.

ANd where it is so. that I haue presumed and empyred this forsaid translacyon in to our englishe and maternall tongue / In whiche I am not well parfyght / And yet lasse in frensshe / Yet I haue endeoured me therin / atte request and desyre coste and dispence of the honourable and worshipful man / Hughe Bryce Cyteseyn and Alderman of london / whiche hath sayd to me that he entendeth to presente it / vnto the puissaunt noble and vertuous lorde My lorde hastynges. Chamberlayn vnto our souerayn

Sig. l. 7
recto, l. 8.

Sig. n. 4.
recto.

souerayn lord the kynge / And his lieutenaunt of the
 toun of Calays ⁊ Marches there / Jn whiche translacion ||
 I knowleche my self symple. rude. and ygnoraunt / wherfor
 I humbly byseche my sayd lord Chamberlayn to perdonne
 me of this rude and symple translacion, how be it, I leye
 for myn excuse, that I haue to my power folowed my copye
 And as nygh as to me is possible I haue made it so
 playn, that euery man resonable may vnderstonde it, yf he
 aduysedly and ententyfly rede or here it, And yf ther be
 faulte in mesuryng of the firmament, Sonne, Mone, or
 of therthe, or in ony other meruaylles herin conteyned, I
 beseche you not tarette the defaulte in me, but in hym that
 made my copye / whiche book I began first to translate the
 second day of Ianyuer the yere of our lord. M.CCCC.
 .lxxx. And fynysshyd the viij day of Marche the same
 yere / And the xxj yere of the Regne of the most Crysten
 kynge / kynge Edward the fourthe, vnder the Shadowe of
 whos noble proteccion I haue emprysed ⁊ fynyashed this
 sayd lytil werke and boke, Besechyng Almyghty god
 to be his protectour and defendour agayn alle his Ene-
 myes, and gyue hym grace to subdue them, and inespeci-
 all them that haue late enterprysed agayn right and re-
 son to make warre wythin his Royamme / And also to
 preserue and mayntene hym in longe lyf and prosperous
 helthe, And after this short ⁊ transitorye lyf he bryng
 hym and vs in to his celestyal blysse in heuene Amen /

lord the kynge / And his lyutenaunt of the toun of Calays and marches there / In whiche translacion I knowleche my self symple / rude ȝ ygnoraunt / wherfore I humbly byseche my sayd lord Chamberlayn to pardonne me of this rude ȝ symple translacion how be it / J leye for myn excuse / that I haue to my power folowed my cople / And as nygh as to me is possible J haue made it so playn / that euery man resonable may vnderstande it / Yf he aduysedly and ententyfly rede or here it ¶ And yf ther be faulte in mesuryng of the firmament / Sonne / Mone / or of therthe. or in any other meruaylles herin conteyned / J beseche you not tarette the faulte in me but in hym that made my cople. whiche booke I began first to tra[n]slate¹ the second day of Ianyuer the yere of our lord / M.CCCC. lxxx. ¶ And fynysshyd the viij day of Marche the same yere / And the xxj yere of the Regne of the most Crysten kynge. Kynge Edward the fourthe. Vnder the shadowe of whos noble proteccion I haue emprysed and fynysshed this sayd lytyl werke and booke. Besechyng Almyghty god to be his protectour and defendour agayn alle his Enemyes and gyue hym grace to sudue them / And inespéciall them that haue late enterprysed agayn ryght ȝ reson to make warre wythin his Royamme. And also to preserue and mayntene him in longe lyf and prosperous helthe. And after this short and transytorye lyf he brynge hym and vs in to his celestyall blysse in heuene AMEN /

Sig. L 7,
verso.

¶ Caxton me fieri fecit.

¹ text: *translate*

XIV

Reynart the Foxe

[First edition—1481]

[PROLOGUE]

Sig. a. 2,
verso.

Hyer begynneth thystorye of reynard the foxe

In this historye ben wretton the parables / goode lerynge,
 and dyuerse poyntes to be merkyd, by whiche poyntes
 men maye lerne to come to the subtyl knoweleche of su-
 che thynges as dayly ben vsed ʒ had in the counseylls
 of lordes and prelates gostly and worldly / and, also
 emonge marchantes and other comone people / And this
 booke is maad for nede and prouffyte of alle god folke /
 As fer as they in redyng or heeryng of it shal mowe
 vnderstande and fele the forsayd subtyl deceytes that day-
 ly ben vsed in the worlde / not to thentente that men shold
 vse them but that euery man shold eschewe and kepe
 hym from the subtyl false shrewis that they be not dece-
 yuyd / Thenne who that wyll haue the very vnderstan-
 dyng of this mater / he muste ofte and many tymes rede
 in thys boke and earnestly and diligently marke wel
 that he redeth / ffor it is sette subtylly, lyke as ye shal see
 in redyng of it / and not ones to rede it ffor a man shal
 not wyth ones ouer redyng fynde the ryght vnderstan-
 dyng ne comprise it wel / but oftymes to rede it shal cause
 it wel to be vnderstande, And for them that vnderstan-
 deth it / it shall be ryght Ioyous playsant and prouf
 fitable

Reynart the Foxe

[First edition—1481]

[EPILOGUE]

The original ends with the words: "And the foxe lyued forthon wyth his wyf and his chyldren in grete Ioye and gladness" To which Caxton adds:

Sig. l. 5,
recto, l. 10.

Now who that said to yow of the ffoxe more or lesse than ye haue herd or red, I holde it for lesynge / but this that ye haue herd or red, that may ye byleue wel / ʒ who that byleueth it not, is not therefore out of the right byleue, how be it, ther be many yf that they had seen it, they shold haue the lasse doubte of it, for ther ben many thynges in the world whiche ben byleuyd though they were neuer seen / Also ther ben many fygyres / playes founden / that neuer were don ne happed, / But for an example to the peple / that they may ther by the better / vse and folowe vertue / ʒ teschewe synne and vyces, in lyke wyse may it be by this hooke, that who that wyl rede this mater / though it be of iapes and bourdes / yet he may fynde therin many a good wyse- dom and lernynges / By whiche he may come to vertue ʒ worship. Ther is no good man blamed herin / hit is spoken generally / Late euery man take his owne part as it belongeth ʒ behoueth / and he that fyndeth hym gylty in ony dele or part therof / late hym bettre ʒ amende hym And he that is veryly good / I pray god kepe him therin || And yf ony thyng be said or wreton herin / that may greue or dysplease ony man, blame not me / but the foxe / for they be his wordes ʒ not myne, Prayeng alle them that shal see this lytyl treatis / to correcte and amende, Where they shal fynde faute / For I haue not added ne mynussed but haue folowed as nyghe as I can my cople whiche was in dutche, and by me willm Caxton translated in to this rude ʒ symple englyssh in thabbey of Westmestre. fynysshed the vj daye of Iuyn the yere of our lord M.CCCC.Lxxxj. ʒ xxj yere of the regne of kynge Edward the iiijth /

Sig. l. 5,
verso.

Here endeth the historye of Reynard the foxe ʒc.

Reynart the Foxe

[Second edition—1489]

[EPILOGUE]

The only known copy wants two final leaves : they are however supplied in Manuscript of 17th. Century and conclude with this epilogue—probably transcribed from a copy as issued by Caxton.

I shall therefore make an end. Now this is the History of Renard so ferre forth as is knowen or mote be gadered out of ould Bokes, and if ony more shal be written of him than is hier set forth, it ben all lies and falshoods for it is not written ony where what did hereafter befall hym nor how he dyde, but I weene he was hongid for he hyely deseruyd it, for he was a shrewde and felle theefe and deceivyd the king with lesingys and so mote all false traytours and such as ben pleyn'd with ony Vilony be honged by their Neckis I shold be therewith weel apayd. Yet there ben many such which neverthelesse abide in great worship all their livys yet that helpeth not but they goo to hell when they dye and the Deviles pull them by their beardes and brenne their erses with hote Irons, tho sofre they moche paine for their misdedydys: God grant us his grace that we may not comen therto, for it is an evel place, it growleth me sore and myne heer stondeth right up when I think thereon. But if wee ben trew men and ryght wise wee shall soo be delivered fro the peryl of deth.

Explicit.

XV

Polycronicon

[1482]

[PROHEMYE]

Sig. a. 2,
recto.Simple
illuminated
capital.

g Rete thankynges lawde ʒ honoure we merytoryously ben bounde to yelde and offre vnto wryters of hystoryes / which gretely haue prouffytet oure mortal lyf / that shewe vnto the reders and herers by the ensamples of thynges passyd / what thyng is to be desyred / And what is to be eschewed / For those thynges whiche oure progenytours by the taste of bytternes and experyment of grete jeopardyes haue enseygned / admonested and enformed vs excluded fro suche peryllys / to knowe what is prouffyttable to oure lyf / and acceptable / and what is vnprouffyttable and to be refused / He is / and euer hath ben reputed the wysest / whiche by the experyence of aduerse fortune hath byholden and seen the noble Cytees / maners / and variaunt condycions of the people of many dyuerse Regyons / For in hym is presupposed the lore of wysedome and polycye / by the experyment of Jeopardyes and peryllys whiche haue growen of folye in dyuerse partyes and contrayes / yet he is more fortunat / and may be reputed as wyse yf he gyue attendaunce without tastynge of the stormes of aduerayte that may by the redyng of historyes conteynyng dyuerse customes Condycyons / lawes ʒ / Actes of sondry nacions come vnto the knowleche of and vnderstandynge of the same wysedom and polycye / Jn whiche hystories so wreton in large and aourned volumes / he syttyng in his chambre or studye / maye rede / knowe and vnderstande the polytyke and noble actes of alle the worlde as of one Cyte / And the conflyctes / errours. Troubles / ʒ vexacions done in the sayd vnyuersal worlde / Jn suche wyse as he had ben and seen them. in the propre places where as they were done / For certayne it is a greete beneurte vnto a man that can be reformed by other and straunge mennes hurtes and scathes / And by the same to knowe / what is requysyte and prouffyttable for his lyf / And eschewe suche errours and Jnconueny tys / by whiche other men haue ben hurte and lost theyr felicyte / Therefore the counseylls of Auncyent and whyte heeryd men / in

whome olde age hath engendryd wysedom / ben gretely preysed
of yonger men / And yet hystories soo moche more excelle them /
As the dyturnyte or length of tyme Includeth moo ensamples
of thynges and laudable actes. than thage of one man may suf-
fyttable to see / ¶ Histories ought not only to be Iuged moost pro-
fyttable to yonge men / whiche by the lecture / redyng ʒ vnderstan-
dyng made them semblable ʒ equale to men of greter age, and ||
to old men / to whome longe lyf hath mynystred experymentes
of dyuerse thynges / but also thystories able ʒ make ryght pry-
uate men digne ʒ worthy to haue the gouernaunce of Emperres ʒ
noble Royammes / histories moeue and withdrawe Emperours
and kynges fro vycious tyrannye / Fro vecordyous sleuthe /
vnto tryumphe and victorye in puyssaunt bataylles / Histories
also haue moeued ryght noble knyghtes to deserue eternal laude
whiche foloweth them for their vctoryous merytes / And cause
them more valyantly to entre in Ieopardyes of batayles for the
defence and tuicion of their countrey / and publyke wele / hystorie
also affrayeth cruel tyrauntys for drede of Infamye and shame
Infynyte / by cause of the detestable actes of suche cruel personnes
ben oftymes plantyd and registryed in Cronykes vnto theyr
perpetuel obprobrye and dyuulgacion of theyr Infamye / As
thactes of nero and suche other / Truly many of hie and couragy-
ous men of grete empayse / desyryng theyr fame to be perpetuelly
conseruyd by lyberal monumentis / whiche ben the permanente re-
cordes of euery vyrtuose and noble Acte / haue buylded and e-
defyed ryall and noble Cytees / And for the conseruacion of the
wele publycke haue mynystred and establysshed dyscrete and
prouffyttable lawes / And thus the pryncipal laude / and cause
of delectable and amyable thynges / in whiche mannes felycyte
stondeth and resteth ought and maye wel be attributed to hysto-
ryes / whiche worde hystorie may be descryued thus / Hystorie is
a perpetuel conseruatryce of thoos thynges / that haue be done
before this presente tyme / and also a cotydan wytnesse of bien-
fayttes of malefaytes / grete Actes / and tryumphal vctoryes
of all maner peple. And also yf the terryble feyned Fables of
Poetes haue moche styred and moeued men to pyte / and con-
seruyng of Justyce / How moche more is to be supposed / that
Hystorie assertryce of veryte / and as moder of alle philosophye /
moeuyng our maners to vertue / reformeth and reconcyleth ner
hande alle thoos men / whiche thurgh the Infyrmyte of oure

Fig. a. 2.
verso.

CAXTON.

F

mortal nature hath ledde the mooste parte of theyr lyf in Ocy-
 syte and mysuspended theyr tyme passed ryght soone oute of Re-
 membraunce / Of whiche lyf and deth is egal oblyuyon /
 The fruytes of vertue ben Immortall / Specyally whanne they
 ben wrapped in the benefyce of hystories /
 Thenne it muste folowe / that it is mooste fayre to men Mortalle
 to suffre labours and payne / for glorye and fame Jnmortalle / ||
 Hercules whan he lyued suffryd greete laboures and peryllys
 wylfully puttyng hym self in many terryble and ferdful ieopar
 dyes to obteyne of all peple the benefaytes of Immortal laude ¶
 renomnee / ¶ We rede of other noble men / somme lordes ¶
 somme other of lower astates reputed as goddes in dyuerse re-
 gyons / the whos famous actes / and excelle[n]t¹ vertues only hys-
 torye hath preseruyd fro perysshing in eternal memorye / Other
 monymentes distributed in dy[u]erse² chaunges / endure but for a
 short tyme or season / But the vertu of hystorye dyffused ¶ spredd
 by the vnyuersal worlde hath tyme / whiche consumeth all other
 thynges as conseruatryce and kepar of her werke /
 Ferthermore eloquence is soo precious and noble / that almooste
 noo thyng can be founden more precious than it / By Eloquence
 the grekes ben preferryd in contynuel honour to fore the rude bar
 bares / Oratours and lerned clerkes in like wise excelle vnlearned
 and brutyssh peple / Syth this eloquence is suche that causeth men
 emonge them self somme texcelle other / after the qualyte of the
 vertue and eloquence be seyn to be of valew / For somme we Iu-
 ge to be good men digne of laude / whiche shewe to vs the waye
 of vertue / and other haue taken another waye for tenflamme
 more the courages of men by fables of poesye / than to prouffyte
 And by the lawes and Institutes more to punyssh than to teche
 Soo that of thyse thynges the vtylyte is myxt with harme /
 For somme sothly techyth to lye / But historye representynge the
 thynges lyke vnto the wordes / embraceth al vtylyte ¶ prouffite
 It sheweth honeste / and maketh vyces detestable / It enhaunceth
 noble men and depresseth wicked men and fooles / Also thynges
 that historye descryueth by experyence / moche prouffytyn vnto a
 ryghtful lif / Thenne syth historye is so precious ¶ also prouffyta-
 ble / J haue delybered to wryte twoo bookes notable / retenyng
 in them many noble historyes / as the lyues / myracles / passyons
 and deth of dyuerse hooly sayntes whiche shal be comprysed by

Sig. a 3.
 recto.

¹ text: *excellens*

² *dyuerses*

thayde and suffraunce of almyghty god in one of them, whiche is named *legenda aurea* / that is the golden legende / And that other book is named *polycronicon* / in whiche book ben comprised briefly many wonderful historyees / Fyrst the descripcion of the vniuersal world / as wel in lengthe as in brede with the diuisions of countrees royammes ʒ empyres / the noble cytees / hye mountayns famous ryuers / merueyilles ʒ wondres / ʒ also the historial Actes ʒ wonderful dedes syth the fyrst makyng of heuen ʒ erth vnto || the begynnyng of the regne of kyng edward the fourth / ʒ vnto the yere of our lord M/CCCC lx. As by thayde of almyghty god shal folowe al a longe / after the composyng ʒ gaderyng of dan Ranulph monke of chestre fyrste auctour of this book / and afterward englysshed by one Treuisa vycarye of barkley / which atte request of one Sir thomas lord barkley translated this sayd book / the byble ʒ *bartylmew de proprietatibus rerum* out of la tyn in to englyssh / And now at this tyme symply emprynted ʒ sette in forme by me William Caxton and a lytel embelysshed fro tholde makyng / and also haue added suche storyes as I coude fynde fro thende that the said Ranulph fynysshed his book which was the yere of our lord. M.CCC lvij vnto the yere of the same M C C C C lx / whiche an honderd ʒ thre yere / whiche werke J haue fynysshed vnder the noble protection of my most drad naturel and souerayne lord and moost cristen kyng / kyng Edward the fourth / humbly besechyng his moost noble grace to pardone me yf ony thyng be sayd therynne of Ignoraunce / or other wyse than it ought to be And also requyryng al other to amende wher as ther is defaute / wherin he or they may deserue thank ʒ meryte / And J shal praye for them that soo doo / For I knowleche myn Ignoraunce and also symplenes / And yf ther be thyng that may plesse or prouffite ony man, I am glad that J haue achiedued it / And folowyng this my prohemye I shal set a table shortly towchyd of the moost parte of this book. / And where the sayd Auctor hath alle his werke in seuen bookes, J haue sette that whiche J haue added to after a parte. and haue marked it the laste booke / and haue made chapytres acording to the other werke / Of whiche accomplysshying / J thanke Almyghty God To whome be gyuen Honour / laude / and glorye / in *secula seculorum Amen* /

Sign. a 3.
verso.

Deo gracias.

Polycronicon

[1482]

[BK VII. EPILOGUE.]

Fig. 49. 4.
recto
Simple
Illuminated
capital T.

Hus endeth the book [n]amed¹ Proloconycon made ʒ compiled by Ranulph monk of chestre / whiche ordeyned it in latyn ʒ atte request of the ryght worshipful lord / Thomas lord of berkeley it was translated into englisshe by one Treuisa thenne vyca ry of the Paryssh of barkley / And for as moche as syth the accomplissheme[n]te² of this sayd booke made by the sayd Ranulph ended the yere of oure lord a / M / CCC / lvij / many thynges haue fallen whiche ben requysyte to be added to this werke / by cause mennes wyttes in this tyme ben oblyuous and lyghtly forge ten many thynges dygne to be putte in memorye / and also there can not be founden in these dayes but fewe that wryte in theyr regystres suche thynges as dayly happen and falle Therefore J William Caxton a symple persone haue endeouyred me to wryte fyrst ouer all the sayd book of proloconycon / and somewhat haue changed the rude and old englyssh / that is to wete certayn wordes / which in these dayes be neither vsyd ne vnderstanden / ʒ furthermore haue put it emprynte to thende that it maye be had ʒ the maters therein comprised to be knowen / for the boke is general touchyng shortly many notable maters / ʒ also am auysed to make another booke after this sayd werke whiche shal be sett here after the same / And shal haue his chapytres ʒ his table a parte For J dar not presume to sette my booke ne ioyne hit to his / for dyuerse causes / one is for as moche as I haue not ne can gete no bokes of auctoryte treatyng of suche cronykes / except a lytel boke: named fasciculus temporum / and another callyd Aureus de vniuerso / in whiche bookes J fynde ryght lytel mater syth the sayde tyme ¶ / And another cause is / for as moche as my rude symplenesse and ignorant makyng ought not to be compared / set ne ioyned to his boke / Thenne J shal by the grace of god set my werke after a parte for to accomplissh the yeres syth that he fynysshed his book / vnto the yere of our lord / M / CCCC / lx / and the fyrst yere of the Regne of kyng edward the fourthe / whiche amounte to an honderd and thre yere /

¹ text: *uamed*² *complisshemeute*

Polycronicon

[1482]

[PROLOGUE TO *Liber ultimus*]

Incipit Liber ultimus

t Henne folowyng this fore wreton booke of Prolicronycon

J haue emprysed to ordeyne this newe booke by the suffraunce of Almyghty god to contynue the sayd werk bryefly / And to sette in hystorial thynges / such as J haue coune gete / from the tyme that he lefte / that was in the yere of oure lord a thousand thre honderde and seuen and fyfty vnto the yere of our sayd lord thousand four honderd and syxty and to the fyrst yere of the regne of kynge Edward the fourth /

Sig. 50. f.
recto.
Simple
illuminated
capital.

XVI

The Book of Fame

[1483]

[EPILOGUE]

I fynde nomore of this werke to fore sayd / For as fer as I can vnderstonde / This noble man Gefferey Chaucer fynysshyd at the sayd conclusion of the metyng of lesyng and sothsawe / where as yet they ben chekked and maye not departe / whyche werke as me semeth is craftyly made / and dygne to be wreton ʒ knowen / For he towchyth in it ryght grete wysedom ʒ subtyll vnderstondyng / And so in alle hys werkys he excellyth in myn oppynyon alle other wryters in our Englyssh / For he wrytteth no voyde wordes / but alle hys mater is ful of hys and quycke sentence / to whom ought to be gyuen laude and preysyng for hys noble makyng and wrytyng / For of hym alle other haue borrowed syth and taken / in alle theyr wel sayeng and wrytyng / And I humbly beseche ʒ praye yow / emonge your prayers to remembre hys soule / on whyche and on alle crysten soulis I beseche almyghty god to haue mercy Amen

Sig. d. 111j
recto.

Emprynted by wylliam Caxton

XVII

The Golden Legende

1483

[PROLOGUE 1]

f. 3 recto, col. 1, beneath woodcut of horse.

ND FOR AS MOCHE AS THIS
 1 sayd werke was grete ȝ ouer
 chargeable to me taccomplishe
 I feryd me in the begynnyng of the
 translacyon to haue contynued it / by
 cause of the longe tyme of the transla-
 cion / ȝ also in thenpryntyng of þ^e same
 ȝ in maner halfe desperate to haue ac-
 complissd it / was in purpose to haue
 lefte it / after that I had begonne to
 translate it / ȝ to haue layed it aparte
 ne had it be at thynstaunce ȝ requeste
 of the puysant noble ȝ vertuous erle
 my lord wyllyam erle of arondel / whi
 che desyred me to procede ȝ contynue
 the said werke / ȝ promysed me to take
 a resonable quantyte of them when they
 were achyeued ȝ accomplished / and
 sente to me a worshypful gentylman
 a seruaunte of his named Iohn Stan-
 ney whych solycyted me in my Lordes
 name that I shold in no wyse leue it
 but accomplishe it promysyng that my
 sayd lord shold duryng my lyf yeue
 ȝ graunte to me a yerely fee / that is
 to wete a bucke in sommer / ȝ a doo in
 wynter / with whiche fee I holde me
 wel contente / Thenne atte contempla-
 cion ȝ reuerence of my sayd lord / J
 haue endeucyred me to make an ende
 ȝ fynysse thys sayd translacion / and |
 foot of 1st column.

¹ Simple illuminated capital A.

also haue enprynted it in the moost best
 wyse that I haue coude or myght / and
 presente this sayd book ¹ to his good ȝ
 noble lordshyp / as chyef causer of the
 achyeuyng of hit / prayeng hym to take
 it in gree of me Wyllyam caxton hys
 poure seruaunte / ȝ that it lyke hym to
 remembre my fee / ȝ I shal praye vnto
 almyghty god for his longe lyf and
 welfare / ȝ after this shorte ȝ transy-
 torye lyf to come in to euerlastyng ioye
 in heuen / the whiche he sende to hym ȝ
 me / ȝ vnto al them that shal rede and
 here this sayd book / that for the loue ȝ
 feythe of whome al these holy sayntes
 hath suffred deth and passyon amen /

And to thende eche hystory[e]² lyf ȝ
 passyon may be shortely founden I haue
 ordeyned this table folowyng / where ȝ
 in what leef he shal fynde suche as
 shal be desyred / and haue sette the nom-
 bre of euery leef in the margyne /

¹ text : *book*

² text : *hystorry*

[PROLOGUE 2]

f. 2 recto, col. 1, beneath large woodcut.

HE HOLY & BLESSED DOCTOUR
 t¹ Saynt Jerom sayth thys aucto-
 ryte / do alweye somme good
 werke / to thende that the deuyl fynde
 the not ydle / And the holy doctour
 saynt austyn sayth in the book of the
 labour of monkes / that no man stronge
 or myghty to labour ought to be ydle
 for which cause whan I had parfou-
 med ʒ accomplished dyuers werkys
 ʒ hystories translated out of frensshe
 in to englysshe at the requeste of cer-
 teyn lordes / ladyes and gentylnen /
 as thystorye of the recuyel of Troye /
 the book of the chesse / the hystorye of
 Jason / The hystorye of the myrrour
 of the world / the xv bookes of Meta-
 morpheseos in whyche been conteyned ||
 the fables of ouyde / and the hystorye
 of godefroy of boloyne in the conquete
 of Iherusalem / wyth other dyuers wer-
 kys ʒ bookes / ʒ nyste what werke to

¹ Simple illustrated capital.

begynne ʒ put forth after the said wer-
 kys tofore made / ʒ for as moche as y-
 delnesse is so moche blamed / as sayth
 saynt bernard the myllyfluos doctour
 that she is moder of lyes / ʒ stepdame
 of vertues / ʒ it is she that ouerthro-
 weth stronge men in to synne / quen-
 chyth vertue / nouryssheth pryde / ʒ ma-
 keth the waye redy to goo to helle / and
 Johan cassyodore sayth that the thouȝt
 of hym that is ydle thynketh on none
 other thyng but on lychorous metys
 ʒ vyandes for his bely / and the holy
 saynt bernard aforesayd sayth in an
 epystle / whan the tyme shal come / that
 it shal behoue vs to rendre and gyue
 acomptes of our ydle tyme / what reson
 may we rendre / or what answer shal
 we gyue / whan in ydlenes is none ex-
 cuse / ʒ prosper sayth that who someuer
 lyueth in ydlenesse / lyueth in manere
 of a dombe beest / and by cause I haue
 seen the auctorytees / that blame ʒ des-

Legenda Aurea ¹

Monseigneur sainc Jeroisme
 dit ceste auctorite. ffai tous
 iours aucune chose de bien
 que le diable ne te trouisse
 oiseus. Et mon seigneur saint
 augustin dit on liure de leuure des
 moines que nul homme puissant de
 labourer ne doit estre oyseus. Pour la
 quelle chose quant ie oy parfait et

accompli le miroir des hystoires du
 monde et translate du latin en francois
 a la requeste de tres puissant et noble
 dame. Ma dame Jehanne de Bor-
 goigne royne de france par la grace
 de dieu. Je fu tout esbahi a quelle
 ceuure faire ie me metroie apres si tres
 haute et longue ceuures. comme iauoie
 faite par deuant. Et pour ce que

¹ This version by Jean de Vignay should be compared with *Prologue 2* above.

pysse so moche ydlenes / ʒ also knowe wel that it is one of the capytal and dedely synnes moche hateful vnto god Therefore I haue concluded ʒ fermely purposed in my self nomore to be ydle but wyl applye my self to laboure and suche ocupacion as I haue be acustomed to do / ʒ for as moche as saynt austyn aforesayd sayth vpon a psalme / that good werke ought not be doon for fere of payne / but for the loue of rightwysnesse / ʒ that it be of veray ʒ souerayn fraunchyse / and by cause me semeth to be a souerayn wele to Incyte ʒ exhorte men and wymmen to kepe them from slouth and ydlenesse / and to lete to be vnderstonden to suche peple as been not letterd / the natyuytees / the lyues / the passyons / the myracles / and the dethe of the holy sayntes / ʒ also somme other notorye dedes and actes of tymes pas

sed / I haue submysed my self to translate into englyss[h]e¹ the legende of sayntes / which is callyd legenda aurea in latyn / that is to say the golden legende for in lyke wyse as gold is mooste noble aboute al other metalles / in lyke wyse is thys legende holden moost noble aboute al other werkys / ageynst me here myght somme persones saye that thys legende hath be translated tofore and trouthe it is / but for as moche as I had by me a legende in frensshe / another in latyn / ʒ the thyrd in englysshe whiche varied in many and dyuers places | and also many hystories were comprysed in the two other bookes / Whiche were not in the englysshe book and therefore I haue wryton one oute of the sayd thre bookes / which I haue ordryd otherwyse than the sayd en-

¹ text: englyssle

oiseuite est tant blasmee. que monseigneur saint benart dit. que elle est mere de trufies. ourratre de uertus. Et est celle qui trebuche les fors hommes en pechie. et fait escaindre uertu. et norrir orgueil. et fait la uoie daler en enfer. Et iehan cassiodore dit que le pensee de al qui est oiseus ne pense a autre chose que as uiandes pour son uentre. Et mesires. benart dit en une epistre quant a nous conuendra rendre raison du temps oiseus quelle reson en porrons nous rendre. quant en oisuiete ne en temps oiseus na cause de nulle raison. Et prosper mesme dit que al qui uit en oyseuse uit en maniere de beste mue ¶ Et pour ce

que ie ai veu les auctorites qui blasment et despisent oyseue. ne uoil plus estre oiseus. Mais me uoil metre a telle ceuere faire comme ie iay acoustume. Et pour ce que monseigneur saint augustin dit sur un pseume que bonne ceuere ne doit pas estre faite par pouoir de paine mes paramour droiture. Et que cest uraie et souueraine franchise. Et pour ce que il mest ains que cest souuerain bien faire entendre as gens qui ne sont pas lettres les natiuites les uies les passions et les mors des sains et aucuns autres fais notoire des temps passes. Me sui ie mis a translater en francois la legende des sains qui sit dite legende doree. Car aussi comme

glysshe legende is / whiche was so tofore
made / besechyng alle theym that shall
see or here it redde to pardone me where
I haue erryd / or made fawte / whyche
yf ony be / is of ygnoraunce and ageyn
my wylle / and submytte it hooly of
suche as can ʒ may to correcte it / hum
bly bysechyng them so to doo / and in
so doyng / they shal deserue a syngul-
ler lawde and meryte / ʒ I shal pray

for them vnto almyghty god that he
of his benygne grace rewarde them ʒ
that it prouffyte to alle them that
shal rede or here it redde / and may en-
creace in them vertue / and expelle vyce
and synne / that by the ensauple of
the holy sayntes amende theyr lyuyng
here in thys shorte lyf / that by their me-
rytes / they and I may come to euer-
lastyng lyf ʒ blysse in heuen amen /

lor est plus noble sus tous autres
metaus. Ausi est ceste legende tenue
plus noble sus toutes autres. ¶ Si
depri le glorieus pere de paradis que
il li plaise a moy donner sens et temps
et esperance de parfaire deuement cest

ceu ure *commenciee*. Si que ce soit al
a loenge de son glorieus nom. et toute
la court celestial. et au profit de lame
de moy. et a ledificacion de tout ceulz.
et celles qui le liure liront ou orront.

Excerpt 1.

Folio viij. col. i. l. 7. recto.

[1483]

(Circumcision.) Also it is said that it is in the chirche of our lady at andwarp in braband / And there I knowe well þ^t on trynste sonday they shewe it with grete reuerence / And is there born abowte with a grete and a solempne procession and that though I be vnworthy haue seen dyuerse tymes And haue rede and herd there of many myracles that god hath shewd there for it / And as towchyng I haue herd saye there / that there was a Cardynal sente fro Rome for to see it / And as he was at his masse solempnly / it was leyd on the corporas at whiche tyme it bled thre dropes of blood on the said corporas / There they worshippe it as fore the flessch of our lord whiche was cutte of at his circumsicion ⁊ named it there prepucium dni¹ / yf it be trewe / to somme it semeth merueyll by cause it is so that the flessch that was cut of / was of the very flessch that was cutte of his body humayne /

Excerpt 2.

Folio lxx. col i. l. 34. recto

(David.) For as I ones was by yonde the see Rydyng in the compaignye of a noble knyght named Syr Iohn Capons and was also doctour in bothe lawes / ⁊ was born in malyorke and had been viceroye and gouernour of Aragon and Catelone / ⁊ that tyme Counceyllour vnto the duc of bourgonye

¹ for domini

Charloys / It happened we comened of the hystorye of Dauid / and this said noble man told me that he had redde that dauid dyde this penaunce folowyng for thyse said synnes / that he dalf hym in the ground standyng nakyd vnto the heed so longe that the wormes began to crepe in his flesshe / and made a verse of this psalme Miserere / and therne cam out / and whan he was hole therof / he wente in agayn / and stode so agayn as longe as afore is said and made the second verse / and so as many tymes he was doluen in the erth as ben verse in the said psalme of Miserere mei deus / and euery tyme was abydyng therin tyl he felte the wormes crepe in his flesshe / This was a grete penaunce and a token of grete repentaunce / For ther ben in the psalme xx. verses / And xx tymes he was doluen Thus thys noble man told me rydyng bytwene the toun of Gaunt in Flaundres and the toun of Bruxellis in Braband /

*Excerpt 3.*Folio Clviij.¹ l. 19. col 2. verso

(St. George.) Thys blessyd and holy marter saynt George is patron of this royaume of englond / and the crye of men of warre / Jn the workshop of whome is founded the noble ordre of the garter / And also a noble college in the castell of wyndesore / by kynges of englond / In whiche college is the herte of Saynt george / Whyche Sygysmond the Emperour of almayn

¹ Wrongly paginated as a second Clviij.

broughte and gafe for a grete and a
precious relyque to Kyng Harry the
fyfthe / And also the sayd sygismonde
was a broder of the sayd garter / And
also there is a pyece of his heed which
college is nobly endowed to thonoure
and worshyp of almyghty god / and
hys blessyd marter saynt george /
Thenne lete vs praye vnto hym that he
be special protectour and defendour of
thys royaume /

THUS ENDETH THE LYF OF SAYNT
GEORGE.

Excerpt 4.

Folio CClxvj.¹ verso, l. 8. col. 2.

(*St. Austin.*)

Many other myracles hath god she-
wed by his lyfe / and also after his
deth / whiche were ouer longe to wryte
in this booke / For they wold J suppo-
se conteyne a book as moche as al this j
more / but among other vnder correction
J wylle sette here in one myracle / whi-
che J haue sene paynted on an a[u]lter²
of say[n]t³ Austyn at the blacke Freres
at Andwerpe / how be it / J fynde hit
not in the legende myn exampler / ney-
ther in Englysshe / Frensshe / ne in la-
tyn / Jt was soo that this glorious
Doctor made and compyled many vo-
lummes as a fore is sayd / among who-
me he made a book of the Trynyte / Jn
whiche he studyed / and mused fore in
his mynde / soo ferforthe / that on a ty-
me as he wente by the see syde in Anf-
fryke studyeng on the Trynyte / he
fonde by the see syde a lytel childe / why

che hadde made a lytel pytte in the son-
de / and in his honde a lytel sponne /

And wyth the sponne he tooke oute
Water of the large See / and poured
hit in to the pytte And whanne
saynt augustyn behelde hym / he mer-
ueyled / and demaunded hym / what
he dyde And he answerd and
sayde / J wylle lade oute / and brynge
alle this water of this See in to
thys pytte / what sayd he / hit is
Jmpossyble / How maye hit be done /
sythe the See is soo greete and lar-
ge / and thy pytte and sponne soo ly-
tylle / yes forsothe sayd he / J shalle
lyghtlyer / and sonner drawe alle
the Water of the See / And brynge
hit in to this pytte / than thou shalt
brynge the mysterye of the Trynyte
and his dyuynyte in to thy lytel vnder-
standynge / as to the regard therof
For the mysterye of the Trynyte is
greter a[n]d¹ larger to the comparyson
of thy witte and brayne / than is this
grete see vnto this lytel pytte

And therwyth the childe vanysshed ||
CClxxvj.²
away / thenne here may euery man ta-
ke ensample / that no man / and speci-
ally symple lettred men / ne vnlearned
presume to entremete ne to muse on hy-
ghe thynges of the godhede ferther than
We be enfourmed by our faythe / For
our only feyth shalle suffyse vs /
Thenne her wyth J make an ende of
the lyf of thys gloryo[u]s³ Doctor saynt
Austyn / to whome late vs deuou[tely]⁴
praye / that he be a medyatour and ad-

¹ misprinted for CClxxvj

² text: *antler*

³ text: *saynt*

¹ text: *and*

² text: *gloryons*

³ text: CClxxvj

⁴ text: *deuonitely*

uocate vnto the blessyd Trynyte / that
we maye amende oure synful lyfe in
this transytorye world / that whan we
shalle departe / we may come to euerlas-
tyng blysse in heuen / A M E N /

[EPILOGUE]

Folio CCCcxliij. col. 2. recto

Thus endeth the legende named
in latyn legenda aurea / that is to saye
in englysshe the golden legende / For
lyke as golde passeth in valewe alle
other metalles / so thys legende exceedeth
alle other bookes / wherin ben contey-

ned alle the hygh and grete festys of
our lord / the festys of our blessyd la-
dy / the lyues passyons and myracles
of many other sayntes / and other hys-
toryes and actes / as al allonge here
afore is made mencyon / Whiche werke
I haue accomplished at the commaun-
demente and requeste of the noble and
puyssaunte erle / and my special good
lord Wyllyam erle of arondel / ʒ haue
fynysshed it at westmestre the twenty
day of nouembre / the yere of our lord
M/CCCC/lxxxiiij / ʒ the fyrst yere
of the reygne of kyng Rychard the
thyrd

BY ME WYLLIAM CAXTON

XVIII

Caton

[1483]

[PROLOGUE]

Sig. ij.
recto.

¶ Here begynneth the prologue or prohemye of the book callid
Caton / whiche booke hath ben translated in to Englysshe by
Mayster Benet Burgh / late Archedeken of Colchestre and
hye chanon of saint stephens at westmestre / which ful craftly
hath made it in balade ryal for the erudicion of my lord Bou-
sher / Sone ʒ heyr at that tyme to my lord the erle of Estsex
And by cause of late cam to my hand a book of the said Caton
in Frensshe / whiche reherceth many a fayr lernynge and nota

ble ensamples / I haue translated it oute of frensshe in to Englysshe / as al along here after shalle appiere / whiche I presente vnto the Cyte of london /

Nto the noble auneynt / and renommed Cyte / the Cyte
 v of london in England / J william Caxton Cytezeyn
 j coniurye of the same / j of the fraternyte j felauship
 of the mercerye owe of ryght my seruyse j good wyll / and of
 very dute am bounden naturelly to assiste ayde j counceille as
 ferforth as I can to my power / as to my moder / of whom I haue
 receyued my noureture j luyng / And shal praye for the
 good prosperite j polecye of the same duryng my lyf / For as
 me semeth it is of grete nede / by cause I haue knowen it in my
 yong age moche more welthy prosperous j rycher than it is
 at this day / And the cause is that ther is almost none / that en
 tendeth to the comyn wele but only euery man for his singuler
 prouffyte / O whan I remembre the noble Romayns / that for
 the comyn wele of the Cyte of Rome / they spente not only
 theyr moeuable goodes / but they put theyr bodyes j lyues in
 Ieopardy j to the deth / as by many a noble ensample we may
 see in thactes of Romayns / as of the two noble scipions Affri
 can j Asyan / Actilius j many other / And amonge al other
 the noble Catho auctor and maker of this book / whiche he hath
 lefte for to remayne euer to all the peple for to lerne in hit and
 to knowe how e[u]jery¹ man ought to rewle and gouerne hym
 in this lyf / as wel for the lyf temporall / as for the lyf spyrytu
 el / And as in my Jugement it is the beste book for to be ta
 ught to yonge children in scole / j also to peple of euery age
 it is ful conuenient yf it be wel vnderstanden / And by cause
 J see that the children that ben borne within the sayd cyte ||
 encrease / and prouffyte not lyke theyr faders and olders / but
 for the moost parte after that they ben comen to theyr parfight
 yeres of discrecion / and rypenes of age / how wel that theyre
 faders haue lefte to them grete quantite of goodes / yet scarce
 ly amonge ten two thryue / J haue sene and knowen in other
 londes in dyuerse cytees / that of one name and lygnage suc
 cessyuely haue endured prosperously many heyres / ye a v or
 vj honderd yere / and somme a thousand / And in this no
 ble cyte of london / it can vnnethe contynue vnto the thyrd heyr

Simple
 illuminated
 capital.

Fig. 4.
 verso.

¹ text: *enry*

or scarcely to the second / O blessyd lord whanne J remembre
 this J am al abasshyd / J can not Juge the cause / but fayrer
 ne wyser ne bet bespoken children in theyre yongthe ben now-
 her than ther ben in london / but at their ful rypyng ther is no
 carnal ne good corn founden but chaff for the moost parte / J
 wote wel there be many noble and wyse / and proue wel j
 ben better and rycher than euer were theyr faders / And to
 thende that many myght come to honoure and worshyppe / J
 entende to translate this sayd book of cathon / in whiche J do-
 ubte not / and yf they wylle rede it and vnderstande they shal
 moche the better conne rewle them self ther by / For among all
 other bookes this is a synguler book / and may well be callyd
 the Regyment or gouernaunce of the body and sowle /
 There was a noble clerke named pogius of Florence / And
 was secretary to pope Eugenyne / j also to pope Nycholas whi-
 che had in the cyte of Florence a noble j well stuffed lybra-
 rye / whiche alle noble straungyers comynge to Florence desy-
 red to see / And therin they fonde many noble and rare bookes
 And whanne they had axyd of hym whiche was the best bo-
 ke of them alle / and that he reputed for best / He sayd / that he
 helde Cathon glosed for the best book of his lyberarye / Thenne
 syth that he that was so noble a Clerke helde this book for the
 best / doubtles / hit must folowe that this is a noble booke / and
 a vertuous / and suche one that a man may eschewe alle vyces
 and ensiewe vertue / Thenne to thende that this sayd book may
 prouffyte vnto the herars of it / J byseche Almyghty god that
 J may acheue and accomplysse it vnto his laude and glorye
 And to therudicion and lernynge of them that ben ygnoraunt
 that they maye there by prouffyte and be the better / And J ||
 requyre and byseche alle suche that fynde faute or errour / that
 of theyr charyte they correcte and amende hit / And J shalle
 hertely praye for them to Almyghty god / that he rewarde
 them

Sig. liij.
recto.

Simple
illustrated
capital I.

N this smal lytyl booke is conteyned a short and
 prouffitable doctryne for all maner of peple / the whi-
 che is taken and composed upon the said book of Cathon
 with some addicions j auctoritees of holy doctours j prophe-
 tes / And also many Historyes j ensamples autentyke of holy
 faders j auncyent Cronycles trewe j approued / Jtem this

lytell booke shalle be deuyded in two partyes pryncipal / The fyrst partye pryncipal is the proheme whiche begynneth Cum animadueterem / And endureth vnto Jtaque deo supplica / The second partye pryncipal / is the trayttee and alle the maner of this present book / whiche begynneth Jtaque deo supplica / ¹an[d] endureth vnto the ende of the sayd lytel booke / Jtem this second partye pryncipal is deuyded in two partyes / the fyrst is in prose / And the second in verse / the fyrst partye whiche is in prose begynneth Jtaque deo supplica / And endureth vnto Si deus est animus / the whiche conteyneth lvi commaundements Jtem the second partye whiche is in verse / is subduyded in to four partyes / The fyrst begynneth at Si deus est animus / ² endureth vnto Telluris si forte / the whiche conteyneth fourty commaundements / The second partye begynneth at Telluris si forte / ³ endureth vnto / Hoc quicunquibus velis / whiche conteyneth xxxv commaundements / The third partye begynneth at hoc quicunquibus / ⁴ endureth to Securam quicunque / whiche conteyneth xxvj commaundements / the fourth partye begynneth at Securam / and endureth vnto thende of the book / And conteyneth lvi commaundements / And soo this present lytel booke conteyneth in somme two honderd xiiij comma[u]ndments ⁵ / as wel in prose as in verse / But to thende that thystoryes and examples that ber conteyned in this lytel book may be lygh³ly founden / And also for to knowe vpon what commaundementes they ben adiusted and alledged / they shalle be sette and entytled by maner of Rubrysshe in commaundement vpon whiche eche shalle be conteyned and alledged /

|| Sign. ij.

Colophon

Here fynyssheth this present book whiche is sayd or called Cathon translated oute of Frensshe in to Englysshe by William Caxton in thabbay of westmynstre the yere of oure lord MCCCC l xxxiiij / And the fyrst yere of the regne of kynge Rycharde the thyrd the xxiiij day of decembre

Fig. 1.
recto.

¹ text: an-

² text: commannadmen's

³ omission of t

XIX

L' Ordre de Cheuallerie

Cy commence le liure de lordre de
cheuallerie. Prologue.

Illuminated
capital A.

la loenge et gloire de
la pourueance diuine
dieu quy est sire et roy
souuerain par dessus
toutes choses celestes et
terrestes nous commencons ce liure de
lordre de cheuallerie pour demonstrier qu'
a la signifiãnce de dieu le prince tout
puissant quy seignourist sur les .vij.
planettes quy sont cours celestiaulx
et ont pouoir et seignourie en gouuer
ner et ordonner les corps terrestres Pa
reillement doiuent les roix et princes
auoir puissance et seignourie sur les
cheualliers Et les cheualliers par simi
litude doiuent auoir domination et
pouoir sur le menu pemple / et contient
ce liure .viij. chapitres /

XIX

The Order of Chyualry

[1484?]

[PROLOGUE]

¶ HERE BEGYNNETH THE TABLE OF
THIS PRESENT BOOKE JNTYTLED THE
BOOK OF THE ORDRE OF CHYUALRY
OR KNYGHTHODE

UNto the praysynge and dyuyne
glorye of god / whiche is lord and
soueraigne kynge aboue and ouer
alle thynges celestyal / and worldly / we
beganne this book of the ordre of chyualry
For to shewe that to the sygnifyaunce of
god the prynce almyghty whiche seygnor-
yeth aboue the seuen planettes / that ma-
ke the cours celestyal / and haue power ʒ
seygnorye in gouernynge ʒ ordeynynge
the bodyes terrestre and erthely / that in
lyke wyse owen the kynges prynces and
grete lordes to haue puyssaunce and seygnor-
yve vpon the knyghtes / And the kny3
tes by symlytude oughten to haue po-
wer and dominacion ouer the moyen peple
And this booke conteyneth viij chapitres ||

Sig. a 1j.
recto, l. 5.
Printed
ornamental
letter.

Order of Chyualry

[1484?]

[EPILOGUE]

Sig. g. j.
recto, l. 19.Sig. g. j.
verso.Sig. g. ij.
recto.

¶ Here endeth the book of thordre of chyualry / whiche book is translated oute of Frensshe in to Englysshe at a requeste of a gentyl and noble esquyer by me William Caxton dwellynge in Westmynstre || besyde london in the most best wyse that god hath suffred me / and accordyng to the copye that the sayd squyer delyuerd to me / whiche book is not requysyte to euery comyn man to haue / but to noble gentylmen that by their vertu entende to come ʒ entre in to the noble ordre of chyualry / the whiche in these late dayes hath ben vsed accordyng to this booke here to fore wretton but forgeten / and thexcersytes of chyualry / not vsed / honoured / ne excercysed / as hit hath ben in auneyent tyme / at whiche tyme the noble actes of the knyghtes of Englond that vsed chyualry were renommed thurgh the vnyuersal world / as for to speke to fore thyncarnacion of Jhesu Cryste / where were there euer ony lyke to brenius and belynus that from the grete Brytayne now called Englond vnto Rome ʒ ferre beyonde conquered many Royammes and londes / whos noble actes remaine in thold hystories of the Romayns / And syth the Jncarnacion of oure lord / byhold that noble kyng of Brytayne kyng Arthur with al the noble knyghtes of the round table / whos noble actes ʒ noble chyualry || of his knyghtes / occupye soo many large volumes / that is a world / or as thyng incredible to byleue / O ye knyghtes of En-

glond where is the custome and vsage of noble chyualry that was vsed in the dayes / what do ye now / but go to the baynes ʒ playe atte dyse And some not wel aduysed vse not honest and good rule ageyn alle ordre of knyghthode / leue this / leue it and rede the noble volumes of saynt graal of lancelot / of galaad / of Trystram / of perse forest / of Percyual / of gawayn / ʒ many mo / Ther shalle ye see manhode / curtosye ʒ gentylnesse / And loke in latter dayes of the noble actes syth the conquest / as in kyng Rychard dayes cuer du lyon / Edward the fyrste / and the thyrd / and his noble sones / Syre Robert knolles / syr Johan hawkwode / Syr Johan chaundos / ʒ Syre gaultier Manuy rede froissart / And also behold that vycoryous and noble kyng herry the fyfthe / and the capytayns vnder hym his noble bretheren / Therle of Salysbury Montagu / and many other whoos names shyne gloriously by their vertuous noblesse ʒ actes that they did in thonour of || thordre of chyualry / Allas what doo ye / but slepe ʒ take ease / and ar al disordred fro chyualry / J wold demaunde a question yf J shold not displease / how many knyghtes ben ther now in Englund / that haue thuse and thexcercyse of a knyghte / that is to wete / that he knoweth his hors / ʒ his hors hym / that is to saye / he beyngedy at a poynt to haue al thyng that longeth to a knyght / an hors that is accordyng and broken after his hand / his armures and harnoyes mete and syttyng¹ / ʒ so forth / et cetera / J suppose and a due serche shold be made / ther shold be many founden that lacke / the more pyte is / I wold it pleasyd oure souerayne lord that twy-

Sign. g. ij.
verso.

¹ for *fytyng* ?

Fig. g. ij.
recto.

es or thryes in a yere / or at the lest ones
 he wold do crye Justes of pees / to thende
 that euery knyght shold haue hors and
 harneys / and also the vse and craft of a
 knyght / and also to tornoye one ageynste
 one / or ij ageynst ij / And the best to haue
 a prys / a dyamond or Jewel / suche as
 shold please the prynce / This shold cause
 gentrymen to resorte to thauncyent custom-
 mes of chyualry to grete fame and renom- ||
 mee / And also to be alwey redy to serue /
 theyr prynce whan he shalle calle them / or
 haue nede / Thenne late euery man that is
 come of noble blood and entendeth to come
 to the noble ordre of chyualry / rede this ly
 tyl book / and doo thereafter / in keyng the
 lore and commaundements therin compry-
 sed / And thenne J doubte not he shall at-
 teyne to thordre of chyualry / et cetera /
 And thus thys lytyl book J presente to
 my redoubted naturel and most dradde so-
 uerayne lord kyng Rychard kyng of En-
 gloud and of Fraunce / to thende / that he
 commaunde this book to be had and redde
 vnto other yong lordes knyghtes and gen-
 tylmen within this royaume / that the noble
 ordre of chyualry be herafter better used ¶
 honoured than hit hath ben in late dayes
 passed / And herin he shalle do a noble ¶
 vertuose dede / And J shalle pray almy-
 ty god for his long lyf ¶ prosperous wel-
 fare / ¶ that ho may haue victory of al his
 enemyes / and after this short ¶ transitory
 lyf to haue euerlastyng lyf in heuen / whe-
 re as is Joye and blysse world without
 ende Amen / ||

XX

Lyf of our Lady.

[1484]

[EPILOGUE]

Goo lityl book and submytte the
 Vnto al them / that the shal rede
 Or here / prayeng hem for charite
 To pardon me of the rudehede
 Of myn enpryntyng / not takyng hede
 And yf ought be doon to theyr plesyng
 Say they thyse bulades folowyng

m. liij.
 verso, l. 26

Sancte ꝓ Indiuidue trinitati / Ihesu cristi crucifixi
 humanitati gloriose beate marie virgini / sit sempi
 terna gloria / ab omni creatura / per Infinita secu
 lorum secula / Amen

[m. v.]
 recto.

Vnto the holy and undeuyded trynyte
 Thre persones in one veray godhede
 To Ihesu crist crucefyed humanyte
 And to our blessyd ladyes maydenhede
 Be geuyn laude and glorye in veray dede
 Of euery creature / what someuer he be
 World withouten ende / amen say al we

Benedictum sit dulcissime nomen Ihesu crysti / ꝓ
 gloriosissime marie matris eius in eternum ꝓ ultra
 Nos cum prole pia benedicat virgo maria Amen

Blessid be the swettest name of our lord
 Jhesu crist / and most glorious marie
 His blessyd moder / with eternal accord
 More than euer / tendure in glorye
 And with hir meke sone for memorye
 Blesse vs marie / the most holy virgyne
 That we regne in heuen with the ordres nyne.

Enprynted by Wylyyam Caxton

XXI

The Book of the Knyght of the Towre

[1484]

PROLOGUE

f. 1. recto.

a Lle vertuose doctryne ꝓ techynge had ꝓ lerned of suche
 as haue endeouored them to leue for a remembraunce
 after theyr dethe to vs / by whiche we ben enfourmed
 in scyence / wysedom and vnderstandyng of knowleche / hou we
 ought to rewle our self in this present lyf haue caused vs to
 know many good reules / ꝓ vertuose maners to be gouerned
 by / Emonge al other this book is a special doctryne ꝓ techyng
 by which al yong gentyl wymen specially may lerne to bihaue
 them self vertuously / as wel in their vyrgynyte as in their
 wedlok ꝓ wedowhede / as al along shal be more playnly said in
 the same / which boke is comen to my handes by the request ꝓ de
 syre of a noble lady which hath brouzt forth many noble ꝓ fayr
 dougters which ben vertuously nourisshed ꝓ lerned / And for
 very ziele and loue that she hath alway had to her fayr children
 ꝓ yet hath for to haue more knoueleche in vertue to thende þ^t they
 may alwey perseuere in þ^t same hath desired ꝓ required me to *trans*
 late ꝓ reduce this said book out of frenssh in to our vulgar en
 glissh / to thende that it may the better be vnderstonde of al suche as
 shal rede or here it / wherfor atte contemplacion of her good grace
 after the lytel connyng that god hath sent me / I haue endeuoy
 ryd me to obeye her noble desyre ꝓ request / In whiche werk I
 fynd many vertuous good enseynementis ꝓ lernynges by euy
 dent histories of auctorite ꝓ good ensamples for al maner peple
 in generally / but in especial for ladyes ꝓ gentilwymen dougters
 to lordes ꝓ gentilmen / For whiche book al the gentilwymen
 now lyuyng ꝓ herafter to come or shal be arn bounde to gyue
 laude prayseyng ꝓ thankynges to the auctor of this book ꝓ also
 to the lady that caused me to translate it ꝓ to pray for her long
 lyf ꝓ welfare / ꝓ when god wil calle her fro this transitory lyf
 that she may regne in heuen sempiternally where as is Joye ꝓ
 blysse without ende / Theñne for as moche as this book is neces
 sary to euery gentilwoman of what estate she be I aduyse eue
 ry gentilman or woman hauyng such children / desyryng them

to be vertuously brouzt forth to gete ʒ haue this book to thende
 that they may lerne / hou they ouzt to gouerne them vertuously
 in this present lyf / by whiche they may the better ʒ hastlyer co
 me to worship and good renomme / And J desyre all them
 that shall lerne or see ony thyng in this sayd book / by whiche
 they shal ben the wyser ʒ better / that they gyue laude ʒ thankyng ||
 to the sayd ladyes good grace / and also to praye for her / And f. 1. verso.
 where as ony defaulte shalle be founde in the reducyng and
 translatyng in to our Englysshe tongue / that it be arrettid to
 me whiche am Jgnoraunt and not expert in the werke thouz
 so be that J haue empyred here to fore to smatre me in suche
 translacions whiche J confesse and knowleche me ignoraunt
 and therin to be Jmperfect / wherfore J humbly requyre and
 byseche my sayd good lady to pardonne me of my symple and
 rude reducyng / And yf ony thyng be sayd or made vnto her
 playsyre / than J thynke my labour wel employed / whome I
 humbly byseche to receyue this lytel book in gree ʒ thanke / ʒ
 J shalle pray to almyghty god for her longe and good lyf /
 and to send to her after this shorte and transytory lyf euer
 lastyng lyf in heuen Amen / And alle other that be vnderstan
 dyng ʒ fyndyng ony defaute / I requyre ʒ pray them of theyre
 charyte to correcte and amende hit / and so doyng they shal de
 serue thanke and meryte of god / to whome J shalle pray for
 them /

COLOPHON.

Here fynysshed the booke / whiche the knyght of the Toure ma
 de to the enseynement and techyng of his daughters transla
 ted oute of Frenssh in to our maternall Englysshe tongue by
 me William Caxton / whiche book was ended ʒ fynysshed the
 fyrst day of Juyn / the yere of oure lord MCCCC lxxxij
 And enprynted at westmynstre the last day of Janyuer the
 fyrst yere of the regne of kyng Rychard the thyrd

Fig. n 4,
verso.

XXII

The Fables of Esope

[1484]

[EPILOGUE]

[Sig. 6.]
l. 25, recto.

NOw thenne J wylle fynysse alle these fables wyth this tale that foloweth whiche a worshipful preest and a parson told me late / he sayd / that there were duellynge in Oxenford two prestes bothe maystres of arte / of who me that one was quyck and coude putte hym self forth / And that other was a good symple preest / And soo it happed that the mayster that was perte and quyck, was anone promoted to a benefyce or tweyne / and after to prebendys / and for to be a Dene of a grete prynces chappel / supposynge and wenyng that his felaw the symple preest shold neuer haue be promoted but be alwey an Annuel / or at the most a parysshe preest / So after longe tyme that this worshipful man this dene came rydyng in to a good paryssh with a x or xij horses / lyke a prelate / and came in to the chirche of the sayd parysshe / and fond ||

there this good symple man sontyme his felawe / whiche cam and welcomed hym lowely / And that other badde hym good morowe mayster Johan / and toke hym sleightly by the hand and axyd hym where he dwellyd / And the good man sayd / in this paryssh / how sayd he / are ye here a sowle preest or a paryssh preste / nay syr said he / for lack of a better though I be not able ne worthy J am parson and curate of this parysshe / and thenne that other aualed his bonet and said mayster parson I praye you to be not displeasyd / J had supposed ye had not be benefyced / But mayster sayd he / J pray you what is this benefyce worth to yow a yere / Forsothe sayd the good symple man / I wote neuer / for I make neuer accomptes therof / how wel J haue had hit four or fyue yere / And knowe ye not said he what it is worth / it shold seme a good benefyce / No forsothe sayd he / but J wote wel what it shalle be worth to me / why sayd he / what shalle hit be worth / Forsothe sayd he / yf J doo my trewe dylygence in the cure of my parysshens in prechyng and techynge / and doo my parte longynge to my cure / I shalle haue heuen therefore / And yf theyre sowles ben lost or any of

[Sig. 6.]
verso.

them by my defawte / J shall be punysshed therefore / And herof
 am J sure / And with that word the ryche dene was abashed
 And thought he shold be the better / and take more hede to liis
 cures and benefyces than he had done / This was a good an-
 swere of a good preest and an honest / And here with J fy-
 nysse this book / translated ʒ emprynted by me William Cax-
 ton at westmynstre in thabbey / And fynysshed the xxvj daye
 of Marche the yere of oure lord MCCCC lxxxiiij / And the
 fyrst yere of the regne of kyng Rychard the thyrdde

 XXIII

Curial

[1484]

PROLOGUE

Here foloweth the cople of a letter whyche maistre Alayn sig. j. re. to.
 Charetier wrote to hys brother / whyche desired to come dwelle in
 Court / in whyche he reherseth many myseryes ʒ wretchydnesses
 therin vsed / For tadyse hym not to entre in to it / leste he af-
 ter repente / like as hier after folowe / and late translated out of
 frensche into englysshe / whyche Cople was delyuerid to me by a
 noble and vertuous Erle / At whos Instance ʒ requeste I haue
 reduced it in to Englyssh

Colophon.

Thus endeth the Curial made by maystre Alain Charretier vj. recto.
 Translated thus in Englyssh by Wylliam Caxton

XXIV

Canterbury Tales

Second Edition [1484]

PROHEMYE

Fig. a ij.
recto.
Simple
illuminated
capital.

Rete thanks laude and honour / ought to be gy-
uen vnto the clerkes / poetes / and historiographs
g that haue wreton many noble bokes of wysedom
of the lyues / passions / ʒ myracles of holy sayntes
of hystoryes / of noble and famous Actes / and
faittes / And of the cronycles sith the begynnyng
of the creacion of the world / vnto thys present tyme / by whyche
we ben dayly enformed / and have knowleche of many thynges /
of whom we shold not haue knowen / yf they had not left to vs
theyr monumentis wreton / Emong whom and inespecial to fore
alle other we ought to gyue a synguler laude vnto that noble ʒ
grete philosopher Gefferey chaucer the whiche for his ornate wry-
tyng in our tongue may wel haue the name of a laureate poe-
te / For to fore that he by hys labour enbelysshyd / ornated / and
made faire our englisshe / in thys Royame was had rude speche ʒ
Incongrue / as yet it appiereth by olde bookes / whyche at thys day
ought not to haue place ne be compared emong ne to hys beaute-
uous volumes / and aournate writynges / of whom he made ma-
ny bokes and treatyces of many a noble historye as wel in me-
tre as in ryme and prose / and them so craftyly made / that he com-
prehended hys maters in short / quyck and hye sentences / es-
chewyng prolyxyte / castyng away the chaf of superfluyte / and
shewyng the pyked grayn of sentence / vtteryd by crafty and su-
gred eloquence / of whom emonge all other of hys bokes / I pur-
pose temprynte by the grace of god the book of the tales of caun-
tyrburye / in whiche I fynde many a noble hystorye / of euery asta-
te and degre / Fyrst rehercyng the condicions / and tharraye of eche
of them as properly as possyble is to be sayd / And after theyr
tales whyche ben of noblesse / wysedom / gentylesse / Myrthe / and
also of veray holynesse and vertue / wherin he fynysshyth thys
sayd booke / whyche book I haue dylygently ouersen and duly
examyned to thende that it be made acordyng vnto his owen ma-
kyng / For I fynde many of the sayd bookes / whyche wry-

ters haue abrydgyd it and many thynges left out / And in
 somme place haue sette certayn versys / that he neuer made ne sette
 in hys booke / of whyche bookes so incorrekte was one brought to
 me vj yere passyd / whyche I supposed had ben veray true ʒ cor-
 recte / And accordyng to the same I dyde do enprynte a certayn ||
 nombre of them / whyche anon were sold to many and dyuerse
 gentyll men / of whome one gentyllman cam to me / and said that
 this book was not accordyng in many places vnto the book that
 Gefferey chaucer had made / To whom I answerd that I had ma-
 de it accordyng to my cople / and by me was nothyng added ne
 mynusshyd / Thenne he sayd he knewe a book whyche hys fader
 had and moche louyd / that was very trewe / and accordyng vn-
 to hys owen first book by hym made / and sayd more yf I wold
 enprynte it agayn he wold gete me the same book for a cople /
 how be it he wyst wel / that hys fader wold not gladly departe
 fro it / To whom I said / in caas that he coude gete me suche a book
 trewe and correkte / yet I wold ones endeuyre me to enprynte it
 agayn / for to satysfye thauctour / where as to fore by ygnourance
 I erryd in hurtyng and dyffamyng his book in dyuerce places
 in setting in *somme* thynges that he neuer sayd ne made / and le-
 uying out many thynges that he made whyche ben requysite to be
 sette in it / And thus we fyll at accord / And he ful gentyllly
 gate of hys fader the said book / and delyuerd it to me / by whiche
 I haue corrected my book / as here after alle alonge by thayde of
 almyghty god shal folowe / whom I humbly beseche to gyue me
 grace and ayde to achyeue / and accomplysse / to hys laude ho-
 nour and glorie / and that alle ye that shal in thys book rede or
 heere / wyll of your charyte among your dedes of mercy / remem-
 bre the sowle of the sayd Gefferey chaucer first auctour / and ma-
 ker of thys book / And also that alle we that shal see and rede
 therin / may so take and vnderstonde the good and vertuous ta-
 les / that it may so prouffyte / vnto the helthe of our sowles / that
 after thys short and transitorye lyf we may come to euerlastyng
 lyf in heuen / Amen

Sign. a ij.
verso

By Wylliam Caxton

XXV

Kyng Arthur¹

[1485]

[PROLOGUE]

Sig. ij.
recto.

Fter that I had accomplysshed and fynysshed dyuers
 a hystories as wel of contemplacyon as of other hysto-
 ryal and worldly actes of grete conquerors ʒ pryn-
 ces / And also certeyn bookes of ensamples and doctryne /
 Many noble and dyuers gentylmen of thys royame of Eng-
 lond camen and demaunded me many and oftymes / wherfore
 that I haue not do made ʒ enprynte the noble hystorye of the
 saynt greal / and of the moost renommed crysten Kyng / Fyrst
 and chyef of the thre best crysten and worthy / kyng Arthur /
 whyche ought moost to be remembred emonge vs englysshe
 men tofore al other crysten kynges / For it is notoyrly knowen
 thorough the vnyuersal world / that there been ix worthy ʒ the
 best that euer were / That is to wete thre paynims / thre Jewes
 and thre crysten men / As for the paynims they were tofore the
 Jncarnacyon of Cryst / whiche were named / the fyrst Hector
 of Troye / of whome thystorye is comen bothe in balade and in
 prose / The second Alysander the grete / ʒ the thyrd Julyus
 Cezar Emperour of Rome of whome thystories ben wel kno-
 and had / And as for the thre Jewes whyche also were tofore
 thyncarnacyon of our lord of whome the fyrst was Duc Jo-
 sue whyche brought the chyldren of Israhel in to the londe of
 byleste / The second Dauyd kyng of Jherusalem / ʒ the thyrd
 Judas Machabeus of these thre the byble rehérceth al theyr no-
 ble hystories ʒ actes / And sythe the sayd Jncarnacyon haue
 ben thre noble crysten men stalled and admytted thorough the
 vnyuersal world in to the nombre of the ix beste ʒ worthy / of
 whome was fyrst the noble Arthur / whos noble actes I pur-
 pose to wryte in thys present book here folowyng / The second
 was Charlemayn or Charles the grete / of whome thystorye is
 had in many places bothe in frensshe and englysshe / and the
 thyrd and last was Godefray of boloyne / of whos Actes ʒ lyf

¹ The unique copy of this work, which was formerly owned by the Earl of Jersey, is now in the Hoe collection, New York.

I made a book vnto the excellent prynce and kyng of noble me
 morye kyng Edward the fourth / the sayd noble Jentylmen
 Jnstantly requyred me temprynte thystorye of the sayd noble
 kyng and conquerour kyng Arthur / and of his knyghtes
 wyth thystorye of the saynt greal / and of the deth and endyng
 of the sayd Arthur / Affermyng that I ouzt rather tenprynte
 his actes and noble feates / than of godefroye of boloyne / or ||
 ony of the other eyght / consyderyng that he was a man borne
 wythin this royaume and kyng and Emperour of the same /
 And that there ben in frenashe dyuers and many noble volu-
 mes of his actes / and also of his knyghtes / To whome J
 answerd / that dyuers men holde oppynyon / that there was
 no suche Arthur / and that alle suche bookes as been maad of
 hym / ben but fayned and fables / by cause that somme crony-
 cles make of hym no mencyon ne remembre hym noo thyng
 ne of his knyghtes / wher to they answerd / and one in specyal
 sayd / that in hym that shold say or thynke / that there was ne
 uer suche a kyng callyd Arthur / myght wel be aretted grete
 folye and blyndenesse / For he sayd that there were many euy-
 dences of the contrarye / Fyrst ye may see his sepulture in the
 monasterye of Glastyngburye / And also in polycronycon in
 the v book the syxte chappytre / and in the seuenth book the
 xxij chappytre / where his bodye was buryed and after foun-
 den and translated in to the sayd monasterye / ye shall se also
 in thystorye of bochas in his book de casu principum / parte of
 his noble actes / and also of his falle / Also galfrydus in
 his brutyssehe book recounteth his lyf / and in dyuers places
 of Englund / many remembraunces ben yet of hym and shall
 remayne perpetuelly / and also of his knyghtes / Fyrst in the
 abbey of westmestre at saynt Edwardes shryne remaineth the
 prynte of his seal in reed waxe closed in beryll / Jn whych is
 wryton Patricius Arthurus / Britannie / Gallie / Germanie /
 dacie / Jmperator / Item in the castel of douer ye may see Gau-
 wayns skulle / ʒ Cradoks mantel. At wynchester the ronnde
 table / in other places Launcelottes swerde and many other
 thynges / Thenne al these thynges consydered there can no man
 resonably gaynsaye butt here was a kyng of thys lande na-
 med Arthur / For in al places crysten and hethen he is re-
 puted and taken for one of the ix worthy / And the fyrst of
 the thre Crysten men / And also he is more spoken of beyonde

Fig. 4.
verso.

Sig. 11j.
recto.

the see moo bookes¹ made of his noble actes than there be in englond as wel in duche ytalyen spanysshe and grekysshe as in frensshe / And yet of record remayne in wytnesse of hym in wales in the toune of Camelot the grete stones ʒ meruaylous werkys of yron lyeng vnder the grounde ʒ ryal vautes || which dyuers now lyuyng hath seen / wherfor it is a meruayl why he is nomore renommed in his owne contreye / sauf onelye it accordeth to the word of god / whyche sayth that no man is accept for a prophete in his owne contreye / Therne al these thyn ges forsayd aledged J coude not wel denye / but that there was suche a noble kyng named Arthur / and reputed one of the ix worthy ʒ fyrst ʒ chyef of the crysten men / ʒ many noble volumes be made of hym ʒ of his noble knyghtes in frensshe which I haue seen ʒ redde beyonde the see / which been not had in our maternal tongue / but in walshe ben many ʒ also in frensshe / ʒ somme in englysshe but nowher nygh alle / wherfore suche as haue late ben drawn oute bryefly in to englysshe / I haue after the symple connyng that god hath sente to me / vnder the fauour and correctyon of al noble lordes and gentylmen enprysed to enprynte a book of the noble hystories of the sayd kyng Arthur / and of certeyn of his knyghtes after a cople vnto me delyuerd / whyche cople Syr Thomas Malorye dyd take oute of certayn bookes of frensshe and reduced it in to Englysshe / And I accordyng to my cople haue doon sette it in enprynte / to the entente that noble men may see and lerne the noble actes of chiualrye / the Jentyll and vertuou dedes that somme knyghtes vsed in tho dayes / by whyche they came to honour / and how they that were vycious were punysshed and ofte put to shame and rebuke / humbly besechyng al noble lordes and ladyes and al other estates of what estate or degre they been of / that shal see and rede in this sayd book and werke / that they take the good and honest actes in their remembraunce / and to folowe the same / wherin they shalle fynde many joyous and playsaunt hystories / and noble ʒ renommed actes of humanyte / gentylnesse and chyualryes / For herein may be seen noble chiualrye / Curtosye / Humanyte frendlynesse / hardynesse / loue / frendshypp / Cowardyse / Murdre / hate / vertue / and synne / Doo after the good and leue the euyll / and it shal brynge you to good fame and renom.

text: *bookes*

mee / And for to passe the tyme thys book¹ shal be plesaunte
to rede in / but for to gyue fayth and beleue that al is trewe
that is conteyned herin / ye be at your liberte but al is wry-
ton for our doctryne / and for to beware that we falle not to ||
vyce ne synne / but texcersyse and folowe vertu / by whyche we
may come and atteyne to good fame and reuomme in thys
lyf / and after thys shorte and transytorye lyf to come vnto
euerlastyng blysse in heuen / the whyche he graunte vs that
reyngeth in heuen the blessyd Trynnye Amen /

Fig. iij.
verso.

¹ text: *book*

XXVI

Charles the Grete

[1485]

PROLOGUE¹

Fig. a ij. recto, col. 1.

SAynt Paul doctour of col. 2.
somye werkes haultayne doon
verye sayth to vs that
al thynges that ben
reduced by wrytyng / ben wryton
to our doctryne / And Boece
maketh mencion that the helthe
of euery persone procedeth dy-
uercely / Thenne sythe it is soo
that the cristen feyth is affermed
and corobered by the doctours
of holy chyrche / Neuertheless the
thynges passed dyuersly redu-
ced to remembrance / engendre
in vs correction of vnlaful lyf
For the werkes of the auncient
and olde peple ben for to gyue
to vs ensauple to lyue in good
] vertuouse operacions digne]
worthy of helth in folowyng the
good / and eschewyng the euyl

] commysed by their grete strength
] ryght ardaunt courage / to the
exaltacyon of the crysten fayth
and to the confusyon of the he-
then sarazyns and myscreants
whiche is a werk wel contem-
platyf for to lyue wel / And by
cause the sayd henry Bolomyer
hath seen of thys mater / and the
hystories dysioyned wythoute
ordre / therfore at his request af-
ter the capacyte of my lytel en-
tendement / And after thystories
and mater that I haue founden
I haue ordeyned this book folo-
wyng / And it myght soo haue
ben that yf I had been more lar-
gely enformed an al playn I
had [b]etter² make it / For J haue

¹ This is very obviously a translation from the original, like "Thenuoye of thauctour."

² text: *letter*

And also in recountyng of hye hystories / the comune vnderston dyng is better content to the ymagynacion local than to symple auctoryte / to which it is submysed / J saye this gladly / For oftymes I haue ben excyted of the venerable man messire henry bolomyer chanonne of lausazne for to reduce for his playsyr somme hystories as wel in latyn 7 in romaunce as in other facion wryton / that is to say of the ryght puyssaunt / vertuous / and noble charles the grete / kyng of fraunce and emperour of Rome / Sone of the grete Pepyn / And of his prynces 7 barons / As Rolland Olyuer / and other / touchyng |

verso, col. 1. the playsyr of god to whome I submytte al myn entente to write no thyng that ought to be blamed / ne but that it be to the helthe 7 sauacion of euery persone /

THenne for as moche J late had fynnyshed in enprynte the book of the noble 7 vycoryous kyng Arthur fyrst of the thre moost noble 7 worthy of crysten kynges / and also tofore had reduced in to englieshe the noble hystorie 7 lyf of Godfrey of boloyne kyng of Iherusalem / last of the said iij worthy Somme persones of noble estate and degree haue desyred me to reduce thystorie and lyf of the noble and crysten prynce Char-

not sayd ony matere / but I haue therof ben enformed / Fyrst by an autentyke book named myrrour hystorial / as by the canones . and somme other bookes whiche make mencyon of the werke folowyng / And by cause I may haue a lytel parte of honourable foundement I shal touche of the first cristen kyng of fraunce For the moste parte of this book is made to thonour of the frenssh men / and for prouffyte of euery man / and after the desyre of the redar and herer / there shalle be founden in the table all playne the mater of whyche the persone shal haue desyre to here or rede / wythoute grete atedyacyon / by ||

Sign. a ij.

here folowyng / besechyng al them that shal fynde faute in the same to correcte and amende it / And also to pardone me of the rude 7 symple reducyng / and though so be there be no gaye termes / ne subtyl ne newe eloquence / yet J hope that it shal be vnderstonden 7 to that entente I haue specyally reduced it / after the symple connyng that god hath lente to me / wherof I humbly 7 wyth al my herte thanke hym / 7 also am bounden to praye for my fader and moders soules / that in my youthe sette me to scole / by whyche by the suffraunce of god I gete my lyuyng I hope truly And that I may so do 7 contynue I byseche hym to graunte me

les the grete kyng of frau[n]ce¹ ȝ
emperour of Rome / the second
of the thre worthy / to thende that
thystories / actes / ȝ lyues may
be had in o[u]r² maternal tongue
lyke as they be in latyn or in
frensshe / For the moost quanty-
te of the people vnderstonde not
latyn ne frensshe here in this no-
ble royame of englond / And for
to satysfye the desyre ȝ requeste
of my good synguler lordes ȝ
specyal maysters and frendes
I haue enprysed and concluded
in myself to reduce this sayd
book in to our englysshe / as all
alonge and playnely ye may
rede / here / and see in thys book |

¹ text: *frauuce*² text: *onr*

of his grace / and so to labour
and occupye myself vertuously
that I may come out of dette ȝ
dedely synne / that after this lyf
I may come to hys blysse in he-
uen AMEN /

Charles the Grete

[1485]

ENVOY

Thenuoye of thaucto[u]r¹ ca x m. vij. recto,
col. 2.

AS J haue sayd at the l. 10.
begynnyng of thys pre-
sent werke / the escriptu-
res and feates / somme haue ben
reduced in wrytyng for to be in
memorye / to the ende that they
that haue doon wel / be to vs en-
sauple in ensyewyng and fo-
lowyng them / ȝ they that haue
doon euyl may be cause to rewle
our lyf for to come to the porte
of helthe / For the comune vn-
derstandyng is more contente to

¹ text: *auclour*

reteyne parables and examples
 for the ymaginacion locall / than
 to symple auctoryte / the whyche
 is reteyned by vnderstandyng /
 and also semblably thystories
 spekyng of our lord Ihesu cryst
 of hys myracles / ʒ of his vertu
 ous subgettes / euery man ouȝt
 gladly to here and retenne them
 ʒ it is so that at the requeste of
 the sayd venerable man to fore
 named Maister henry bolonnyer
 chanonne of lausanne J haue
 been Incyted to translate ʒ re-
 duyse in prose in to Frensshe the
 mater tofore reduced as moche
 as toucheth the fyrst ʒ the thyrd ||
 col. 2.

[m. vii.]
 verso,
 col. 1.

book / J haue taken ʒ drawn
 oute of a book named myrroure
 hystorial for the moost parte / ʒ
 the second book I haue onely re-
 duced it out of an olde romaunce
 in frensshe / And without other
 Informacyon than of the same
 book J haue reduced it in to
 prose substancyally wythout fayl-
 lyng / by ordynaunce of chapytres
 ʒ partyes of the sayd book after
 the mater in the same conteyned
 And yf in al thys book I haue
 mesprysed or spoken otherwyse
 than good langage substancy-
 ally ful of good vnderstandyng
 to al makers and clerkes I de-
 maunde correyxon and amende-
 ment / and of the defaultes par-
 don / For yf the penne hath wry-
 ton cuyll / the hert thought it ne-
 uer / but entended to say wel / ʒ

bene y one of the tresorers of the
 Iewellys of the noble ʒ moost
 crysten kyng / our naturel and
 souerayn lord late of noble me-
 morye kyng Edward the fo[u]rth¹
 on whos soule Ihesu haue mercy
 To reduce al these sayd hysto-
 ryes in to our englysshe tongue
 I haue put me in deuoyr to tran-
 slate thys sayd book as ye here
 tofore may see al a longe and
 pl[a]yn² / prayeng alle them that
 shal rede / see or here it / to pardon
 me of thys symple ʒ rude tran-
 s³[l]acyon and reducyng / byse-
 chyng theym that shal fynde
 faute to correcte it / ʒ in so doyng
 they shal deserue thankynge / ʒ
 I shal praye god for them / who

¹ text: *fourth*
² text: *pl yn*
³ text: *trans acyon*

also my wytte ȝ vnderstondyng whyche is ryght lytel can not vtte ne wryte thys matere with oute errour / Neuertheles who so vnderstondeth wel the lettre / Shal wel compryse myn entencyon / by which he shal fynde nothyng but moeyen for to come to saluacyon / To the whyche may fyna¹ [I]ly come alle they that wyllingly rede / or here / or do thys book to be redde Amen

brynge them and me after this short and transytorye lyf to euerlastyng blyesse Amen / the whyche werke was fynysshed in the reducyng of hit in to englysshe the xvij day of Iuyn the second yere of kyng Rychard the thyrde / And the yere of our lord MCCCC lxxxv / And enprynted the fyrst day of decembre the same yere of our lord ȝ the fyrst yere of kyng Harry the seuenth /

¶ And by cause J wylliam Caxton was desyred ȝ requyred by a good and synguler frende of myn / Maister wylliam dau-

¶ Explicit per william Caxton

¹ text: *fynably*

XXVII

The Book of Good Maners

[1487]

[PROLOGUE]

WHan I consydere the condycions ȝ maners of the comyn people whiche without enformacion ȝ lernyng ben rude and not manerd lyke vnto beestis brute accordyng to an olde prouerbe. he that is not manerd is no man. for maners make man. Thenne it is requesite and necessary that euery man vse good ȝ vertuous maners. And to thende that euery man shold haue knowleche of good maners / An honest man / ȝ a specyall fren[d]e¹ of myn a Mercer of london named wylliam praat which late departed out of this lyf on whos soule god haue mercy / not longe before his deth delyuerd to me in frenshe a lytel book named the book of good maners whiche book is of auctoryte for as moche as there is nothyng sayd therin but for the moost part it is aledged by scrypture of the byble. or ellis by sayeng

Fig. a ij.
recto.

¹ text: *frenos*

of holy sayntes / doctours / philosophres. ⁊ poetes. and desyred me Instantly to translate it in to englyssh our maternal tonge to thende that it myght be had and vsed emonge the people for thamendement of their maners. and to thencreace of vertuous lyuyng. Therne I at the request ⁊ desyre of hym whyche was my synguler frende / and of olde knowlege haue put myself in deuoyr for taccomplyshe his desyre / ⁊ haue after the lytel conyng that god hath lent me translated out of frenshe in to our englyssh this sayd booke of good maners. besechyng almyghty god that it may prouffyte bothe the redars ⁊ herers therof / For that is thentent of hym that was fyrst cause that brouzt the boke to my hande and also of me that haue accomplysshed it. prayeng al them that shal rede ⁊ here it to correcte where as they fynde faulte and to holde me excused of the rude ⁊ vnparfyght englysh. And I beseche almyghty god that it so may be vnderstonden that al they that shal rede or here it / that they may the better lyue in this present lyf that after this lyf they ⁊ I may come to the euerlastyng lyf in heuen where as is Ioye and blysse per[u]rable¹ Amen.

XXVIII

The Royal Book

[1488]

[PROLOGUE]

Sig. a tj.
recto.

WHAN I remembre and take hede of the conuersacion of vs that lyue in this wretched lyf. in which is no surete ne stable abydyng. And also the contynuel besynes of euery man. how he is occupyed and dayly laboureth to bylde ⁊ edefye as though theyr habytacion and dwellyng here / were permanent and shold euer endure. ⁊ also practyse how they may gete temporalle possessyons. goodes and rychesses. of whyche they are neuer contente ne satysfied as for the moost partye. but contynuelly entende and laboure by many subtyl meanes how they may encreace theyr sayd possessyons and richesses for to come and attayne to worldly honour and estate. In whiche they wene be veray felycyte and blessydnes / and whan I haue wel ouerseen ⁊ examyned these forsaid thynges and lyf. I

¹ text: *perdurabile*

fynde nothyng in them but vanyte of vanytees and all vanyte
 ʒ yet I merueylle moche of them that ben lerned wyse ʒ noble
 men in the lawe. that not withstondyng their rychesses. ʒ sure
 lyuyng as wel in spirituelle as in the temporalte contynuelly
 laboure to be enhaunced ʒ promoted to hye dygnytees and
 offyces. as though therin were perpetuel felycyte. In whyche
 ye may see at eye that al is but vanyte. ʒ they that men repute
 for wysest ʒ grettest aboute prynces in a moment ben ouerthro
 wen ʒ brought to nought. Not withstondyng for the moost
 parte. they of the spyrytuelle ʒ also of the temporalte entende
 more to gete. worldly honours. rychesses ʒ possessyons for to
 satisfye the appetyte of their inordynate desyre here in this tran
 sytorye lyf / which anone ʒ hastely shal departe fro the corrup
 tyble body. than they for thetternal lyf which shal euer endure
 in Ioye or in payne. Therne to thende that euery man resona
 ble remembre hym self that he is mortal. ʒ shal withoute fayle
 departe out of this lyf hastely ʒ sone. ʒ ought while he is here
 lyuyng to purueye ʒ ordeyne for the perpetuel lyf to come / ʒ
 so to lyue accordyng to the lawe ʒ comandements of our lord
 ʒ occupye hym self in vertuous operacyons and werkes. in ||
 eschewyng al vices ʒ synnes ʒ al the braunches of them. that they
 may after this short ʒ transytorye lyf attayne ʒ com to the euer
 lastyng lyf in heuen / I purpose ʒ attende by the suffraunce of
 almyghty god to translate a book late delyuerd to me ʒ reduce
 it out of frensshe in to our comyn englysshe tonge. in whyche
 euery man may be enformed how he ouzt to kepe the lawe ʒ
 comaundements of god. to folowe vertu ʒ flee ʒ eschewe vyces
 ʒ to pourueye ʒ ordeyne for hym spyrituel rychesses in heuen
 perpetuel ʒ permaint / which book was made in frensshe atte
 requeste of Phelip le bele kyng of fraunce in the yere of thynear
 nacion of our lord MCCIxxix. ʒ reduced into englysshe at
 the request ʒ specyall desyre of a synguler frende of myn a mer
 cer of london the yere of our sayd lord / M.iiiijC.lxxxiiij. whiche
 book is entytled ʒ named in frensshe. le lyure royal whiche is
 to say in englysshe. the ryal book. or a book for a kyng. in whi
 che book ben comprysed the x comandements of our lord. the xij
 artycles of the fayth / the vij dedely synnes with their braunches
 the vij petycions of the pater noster. the seuen yettes of the holy
 ghost. the vij vertues and many other holy thynges ʒ maters
 good ʒ prouffitable for the wele of mannes soule. Therne I

Sign. a ij.
verso.

exhorte ʒ desyre euery man that entendeth to the prouffyt ʒ saluacyon of his soule / to ouer see this sayd book / in whiche he shal fynde good ʒ prouffyttable doctryne by which he may the rather attayne to come to euerlastyng blysse. ʒ alwaye what that is wryton is vnder correctyon of lerned men / humbly be sechyng them to correcte ʒ amende where as is ony defaute. ʒ so doyng they shal doo a merytory dede. For as nyghe as god hath gyuen me connyng I haue folowed the cople as nyghe as I can. ʒ I besече almyghty god that this sayd werk may prouffyte the redars. ʒ that is the special cause that it is made fore / that knoweth god to whome noo thyng is hyd / whyche gyue vs grace so to lyue vertuously in this short lyf. that after this lyf we may come to his euerlastyng blysse in heuen amen ||

[*Epilogue*]

[Sig. u 9.]
recto, l. 7.

THis book was compyled ʒ made atte requeste of kyng Phelyp of Fraunce in the yere of thyncarnacyon of our lord / M.CC.lxxix. ʒ translated or reduced out of frensshe in to englysshe by me wylliam Caxto[n]¹ atte requeste of a worshipful marchaunt ʒ mercer of london. whyche Instauntly requyred me to reduce it for the wele of alle them that shal rede or here it. as for a specyal book to knowe al vyces ʒ braunches of them. ʒ also al vertues by whyche wel vnderstonden ʒ seen may dyrecte a persone to euerlastyng blysse. whyche book is callyd in frensshe. le liure Royal that is to say the ryal book. or a book for a kyng. For the holy scrypture calleth euery man a kyng. whyche wysely and parfytly can gouerne and dyrecte hym self after vertu. ʒ this book sheweth ʒ enseygneth it so subtylly. so shortly so perceyungly ʒ so parfyghtly. that for the short comprehencion of the noble clergye ʒ of the right grete substance. which is comprysed therin. It may ʒ ought to be called wel by ryght and quycke reason aboue al other bookes in frensshe or in englysshe. the book ryal or the book for a kyng. ʒ also by cause that it was made ʒ ordeyned atte request of that ryght noble kyng Phelyp le bele kyng of Fraunce. ought it to be called Ryall / as tofore is sayd. whiche translacion or reducyng oute of frensshe in to englysshe was achyeued. fynysshed ʒ accomplysshed the xiiij day of Septembre in the yere of thyncarnacyon of our lord. M / CCCC.lxxxiiij / And in the second yere of the Regne of Kyng Rychard the thyrd / ||

¹ text: *Caxton*

XXIX

The Fayttes of Armes

[1489]

[EPILOGUE]

¶ Thus endeth this boke whiche *Christyne* of pyse made ʒ dre we out of the boke named *vegecius de re militari* ʒ out of tharbre of bataylles wyth many other thynges sett in to the same requisite to werre ʒ batailles whiche boke beyng in fren she was delyuered to me willm Caxton by the most crysten kyng ʒ redoubted prynce my naturel ʒ souerayn lord kyng henry the / vij / kyng of englond ʒ of fraunce in his palais of westmestre the / xxiiij / day of Ianyuere the / iiij / yere of his re gne ʒ desired ʒ wylled me to translate this said boke ʒ reduce it in to our english ʒ natural tonge / ʒ to put it in enprynte to thende that euery gentylman born to armes ʒ all manere men of werre captayns / souldiours / vytayllers ʒ all other shold haue knowlege how they ought to behaue theym in the fayttes of warre ʒ of bataylles / and so delyuered me the said book thezme my lord therle of Oxenford awayting on his said grace / whiche volume conteynyng four bokes / I receyued of his said grace ʒ according to his desire whiche to me I repute a comandement / ʒ verili glad to obeye / ʒ after the lityl connyng that god hath lente me I have endeuoird me to the vtterest of my power to fulfyll ʒ accompliashe his desire ʒ comaundement / as wel to reduce it in to englyshe / as to put it in enprynte / to thende that it may come to the sight ʒ knowlege of euery gentylman ʒ man of warre / ʒ for certayn in myn oppiny on it is as necessary a boke ʒ as requysite / as ony may be for euery estate hye ʒ lowe that entende to the fayttes of werre ʒ whether it be in bataylles sieges / rescowse / ʒ all other fayttes subtyltees ʒ remedyes for meschieues / Whiche translacyon was finysshed the / viiiij / day of Iuyll the sayd yere ʒ enprynted the / xiiij / day of Iuyll next folowyng ʒ ful fynnyshyd / then ne syth I haue obeyed his most dredeful comaundement / I humbly byseche his most excellent ʒ bountenous hye[n]es¹ to pardone me of this symple ʒ rude translacion where in be no cury

Sig. S 5.
recto. l. 6.Sig. S 5.
verso.¹ text: *hyeucs*

ous ne gaye termes of rethoryk / but I hope to almighti god
 that it shal be entendyble ʒ vnderstanden to euery man / ʒ al
 so that it shal not moche varye in sentence fro the copye recey
 ued of my said souerayn lord / And where as I haue erryd
 or made defaulte I beseche them that fynde such to correcte it
 ʒ so dooyng I shal praye for them / ʒ yf ther be ony thing ther
 in to his pleasir / I am glad ʒ thinke my labour wel emplo
 yed for to haue the name to be one of the litel seruantes to the
 hiest ʒ most cristen kyng ʒ prince of the world / whom I by
 seche almyghty god to preserue / kepe / ʒ contynue in his noble
 ʒ most redoubted enterpryses as wel in bretayn / flaundes ʒ
 other placis that he may haue victorie honour / ʒ renomnee to
 his perpetual glorie / For I haue not herd ne redde that ony
 prynce hath subdued his subgettis with lasse hurte ʒ ẽ and
 also holpen his neighbours ʒ frendis out of this londe / In
 whyche hye enterprises I byseche almyghty god that he may
 remayne alleway vycorious / And dayly encrease fro ver
 tu to vertue ʒ fro better to better to his laude ʒ honour in this
 present lyf / that after thys short ʒ transitorye lyf / he may at
 teyne to euerlast[y]ng¹ lyf in heuen / Whiche god g[r]aunte² to
 hym and to alle his lyege peple AMEN /

Per Caxton

XXX

Blanchardyn and Eglantine

[1489]

[PROLOGUE]

Slg. f.
 recto.

UNto the right noble puyssaunt ʒ excellent pryncesse my
 redoubted lady my lady Margarete duchesse of Somercete / Moder
 vnto our natural ʒ souerayn lord and most Crysten Kyng henry y^o
 seuenth by the grace of god Kyng of englonde ʒ of ffraunce lord
 of yrelonde ʒc I wyllyam caxton his most Indigne humble
 subgette and lytel seruauant presente this lytyl booke vnto the noble
 grace of my sayd lady. whiche boke I late receyued in frenshe
 from her good grace and her commaundement wyth alle / for to

¹ text: *euerlastyng*

² text: *gaunte*

reduce ʒ translate it in to our maternal ʒ englysh tonge / whiche boke I had longe to fore solde to my sayd lady and knewe wel that the storye of hit was honeste ʒ loyefull to all vertuouse yong noble gentylmen ʒ wymmen for to rede therin as for their passe tyme / for vnder correction in my Iugement / it is as requesyte other whyle to rede in Auncyent hystories of noble fayttes ʒ valiaunt actes of armes ʒ warre which haue ben achiueued in old tyme of many noble prynces lordes ʒ knyghtes / as wel for to see ʒ knowe their walyauntnes for to stande in the specyall grace ʒ loue of their ladyes And in lykewyse for gentyl yonge ladyes ʒ damoysellys for to lerne to be stedfaste ʒ constaunt in their parte to theym that they ones haue promysed and agreed to suche as haue putte their lyues ofte in Leoparde for to playse theym to stande in grace. As it is to occupye theym and studye ouer moche in bokes of contemplacion. Wherefore at thynstaunce and requeste of my sayd lady. whiche I repute as for a commaundement I haue reduced this sayd boke out of frenshe in to our englyshe: whiche boke specyfyeth of the noble actes and fayttes of warre achiueued by a noble and victorious prynce named Blanchardin sone vnto the kyng of Fryse / for the loue of a noble prynesse || callyd Eglantyne other wyse named in frensche lorguyllouse damours whiche is as moche to saye in englyshe. as the proude lady of loue quene of tormaday: And of the grete aduentures. labours anguysshes / and many other grete dysceases of theym bothe to fore they myghte atteyne for to come to the fynall conclusion of their desired loue / as a longe by the grace of god it shall be shewed in thistorye of thys present book / Bysechyng my sayd ladyes bountyuous grace to receyue this lityll boke in gree of me her humble seruauit / and to pardoune me of the rude and comyn englyshe. where as shall be found faulte For I confesse me not lerned ne knowynge the arte of rethoryk / ne of suche gaye termes as now be sayd in these dayes and vsed: B[u]t¹ I hope that it shall be vnderstonden of the redars and herers: And that shall suffyse. ¶ Besechyng allmyghty god to graunte to her moste noble goode grace longe lyffe / and thaccomplysshement of hir hihe noble and loydes desires in thys present lyff: ¶ And after this short and transytorye lyff. euerlastyng lyff in heuen. Amen /

¹ text: *Bat*

XXXI

The Four Sonnes of Aymon

[1489]

[PROLOGUE]¹

AS the Philosopher in the fyr[s]t² booke of hys methafysyque sayth y^t euery man naturally desireth to know and to con newe thynges:

And therefore haue the Clerkes ⁊ peo- ple of great vnderstandynge desyred and coueite to lerned sciences and to know vertues of thinges. Some by Phylosophy, other by Poetrye, and other by Historyes and cronyckes of thynges passed. And vpon these three they haue greatly laboured in suche y^t thanked be God, by theyr good dyligence and laboures: they haue had greate knowledge by innumerable volumes of bookes, whiche haue be made and compyled by great studye ⁊ payne vnto thys day. And bycause that aboute all thinges the princes ⁊ lordes of hie estate and entendment desyre to see thystoryes of the ryght noble and hie vertues of the prode- cessours whiche ben digne, and worthy of remembraunce of perpetuall recommendacion. Therefore late at y^e request and commaundement of the ryght noble and vertus Erle John Erle of Oxeforde my good synguler and especial lorde I reduced ⁊ tran-

ry reduced in lykewyse into our Eng- lische tongue: he late sent to me a booke in Frenche conteynng thactes and faytes of warre doone and made a- gaynst y^e great Emperour and King of Fraunce Charlemayne by y^e .iiii. sonnes of Aymon, other wyse named in Frenche, Les quatre fylz Aymon, whyche booke accordyng to hys re- quest I haue endeuerde me to accom- plyshe and to reduce it into our eng- lyshe, to my great coste and charges as in the translatinge as in enpryn- ting of the same, hopyng ⁊ not doub- tyng but that hys good grace shall rewarde me in suche wise that I shal haue cause to pray for his good and prosperus welfare, And besechynge his said noble good grace to pardon me of y^e rude and this simple worke For accordyng to the copy whyche he sent to me I haue folowed as nigh as I can, and where as any defaute shall be founde I submyt me to the correction of them that vnderstande the cronycke ⁊ hystory bese[c]hlyng³ them to correcte it ⁊ amende there as they shall fynde faute. And I shall praye almighty God for them that so doo to rewarde them in suche wyse that after this shorte and transytorye lyfe

¹ This prologue is not extant in Caxton's own print, but appears in Copland's edition of the work, printed 1554: there is little doubt, however, that it was originally written by Caxton.

² text: *fyrst*

³ text: *besethyng*

slated out of Frenche into our ma- we all may come to euerlastyng lyfe
 ternall and Englyshe tongue the in heuen. Amen.

lyfe of one of his predecessoures na-
 med Robert Erle of Oxeforde tofore
 sayd in diuerse ʒ many great myra-
 cles whiche God shewed for him as
 wel in his lyfe as after his death, as
 it is shewed all alonge in hys sayde
 booke. And also that my sayd Lorde
 desyreth to haue other Hystories of
 olde tyme passed of vertues chyual- ʒ

End of 1st column.

¶ Thus endeth the prologue.

XXXII

Eneydos

[1490]

[PROLOGUE]

After dyuerse werkes made / translated and achieved / ha Sig. A j
 uyng noo werke in hande. I sitting in my studye where as
 laye many dyuerse paunflettis and bookys. happened that
 to my hande cam a lytyl booke in frenshe. whiche late was
 translated oute of latyn by some noble clerke of fraunce whi
 che booke is named Eneydos / made in latyn by that noble
 poete ʒ grete clerke vyrgyle / whiche booke I sawe ouer and
 redde therin. How after the generall destruccyon of the gre
 te Troye. Eneas departed berynge his olde fader anchises
 vpon his sholdres / his lityl son yolus on his honde. his wy
 fe wyth moche other people folowyng / and how he shyped
 and departed wyth alle thystorye of his aduentures that he
 had er he cam to the achievement of his conquest of ytalye
 as all a longe shall be shewed in this present boke. In whi
 che booke I had grete playsyr. by cause of the fayr and hone
 st termes ʒ wordes in frenshe / Whyche I neuer sawe to fo
 re lyke. ne none so playsaunt ne so wel ordred. whiche boo
 ke as me semed sholde be moche requysyte to noble men to see
 as wel for the eloquence as the historyes / How wel that
 many honderd yerys passed was the sayd booke of eneydos

wyth other werkes made and lerned dayly in scolis specyally
 in ytalye ʒ other places / whiche historye the sayd vyrgyle
 made in metre / And whan I had aduysed me in this sayd bo
 ke. I delybered and concluded to translate it in to englysshe
 And forthwyth toke a penne ʒ ynke and wrote a leef or
 tweyne / whyche I ouersawe agayn to correcte it / And whan
 I sawe the fayr ʒ straunge termes therin / I doubted that it
 sholde not please some gentylnen whiche late blamed me
 sayeng yt in my translacyons I had ouer curyous termes
 whiche coude not be vnderstande of comyn peple / and desired
 me to vse olde and homely termes in my translacyons. and ||
 fayn wolde I satsyfye euery man / and so to doo toke an olde
 boke and redde therin / and certaynly the englysshe was so ru
 de and brood that I coude not wele vnderstande it. And also
 my lorde abbot of westmynster ded do shewe to me late certa
 yn euydences wryton in olde englysshe for to reduce it in to
 our englysshe now vsid / And certaynly it was wretton in
 suche wyse that it was more lyke to dutche than englysshe
 I coude not reduce ne brynge it to be vnderstonden / And cer
 tainly our langage now vsed varyeth ferre from that. whi
 che was vsed and spoken whan I was borne / For we eng
 lysshe men / ben borne vnder the domynacyon of the mone.
 whiche is neuer stedfaste / but euer wauerynge / wexyng e
 ne season / and waneth ʒ dyscreaseth another season / And
 that comyn englysshe that is spoken in one shyre varyeth
 from a nother. In so moche that in my dayes happened that
 certayn marchauntes were in a shippe in tamyse for to haue
 sayled ouer the see into zelande / and for lacke of wynde thei
 taryed atte forlond. and wente to lande for to refreshe them
 And one of theym named sheffelde a mercer cam in to an
 hows and axed for mete. and specyally he axyd after eggys
 And the good wyf answerde. that she coude speke no fren
 she. And the marchaut was angry. for he also coude speke
 no frenshe. but wold haue hadde egges / and she vnderstode
 hym not / And thenne at laste a nother sayd that he wolde
 haue eyren / then the good wyf sayd that she vnderstod hym
 wel / Loo what sholde a man in thyse dayes now wryte. eg
 ges or eyren / certaynly it is harde to playse euery man / by
 cause of dyuersite ʒ change of langage. For in these dayes
 euery man that is in ony reputacyon in his countre. wyll vt

Sig. 41.
 verso.

ter his commynycacyon and maters in suche maners ʒ termes / that fewe men shall vnderstonde theym / And som honest and grete clerkes haue ben wyth me and desired me to wryte the moste curyous termes that I coude fynde / And thus bytwene playn rude / ʒ curyous I stande abashed. but in my Iudgemente / the comyn termes that be dayli vsed ben lyghter to be vnderstonde than the olde and auneyent englyshe / And for as moche as this present booke is not for a rude vplondyssh man to labour therin / ne rede it / but onely for a clerke ʒ a noble gentylman that feleth and vnderstonde doth in faytes of armes in loue ʒ in noble chyualrye / Therfor in a meane bytwene bothe I haue reduced ʒ translated this sayd booke in to our englysshe not ouer rude ne curyous but in suche termes as shall be vnderstanden by goddys grace accordyng to my cople. And yf ony man wyll enter mete in redyng of hit and fyndeth suche termes that he can not vnderstande late hym goo rede and lerne vrygyl / or the pystles of ouyde / and ther he shall see and vnderstonde lyghtly all / Yf he haue a good redar ʒ enformer / For this booke is not for e[u]ery¹ rude [and]² vnconnyng man to see / but to clerkys and very gentylmen that vnderstande gentylnes and scyence ¶ Thenne I praye alle theym that shall rede in this lytyl treatys to holde me for excused for the translatyng of hit. For I knowleche my selfe ignorant of connyng to enpryse on me so hie and noble a werke / But I praye mayster Iohn Skelton late created poete laureate in the vnyuersite of oxenforde to ouerse and correcte this sayd booke. And taddresse and expowne where as shalle be founde faulte to theym that shall requyre it. For hym I knowe for suffycient to expowne and englysshe euery dyffyculte that is therin / For he hath late translated the epystlys of Tulle / and the boke of dyodorus syculus. and diuerse other werkes oute of latyn in to englysshe not in rude and olde langage. but in polysshed and ornate termes craftely. as he that hath redde vrygyle / ouyde. tullye. and all the other noble poetes and oratours / to me vnknown: And also he hath redde the ix. muses and vnderstande theyr musicalle scyences. and to whom of theym eche scyence is appropred. I suppose he hath dronken of Elycons well. Then

Sign. A ij.
recto.

Sign. A ij.
verso.

¹ text: *every*

² text: *dua*

I praye hym ʒ suche other to correcte adde or mynysshe whe
 re as he or they shall fynde faulte / For I haue but folowed
 my cople in frenshe as nygh as me is possyble / And yf ony
 worde be sayd therin well / I am glad. and yf otherwyse I
 submytte my sayd boke to theyr correctyon / Whiche boke I
 presente vnto the hye born. my tocomynge naturell ʒ soue-
 rayn lord Arthur by the grace of god Prynce of Walys
 Duc of Cornewayll. ʒ Erle of Chester fyrst hygoten sone
 and heyer vnto our most dradde naturall ʒ souerayn lorde ʒ
 most crysten kyng / Henry the vij. by the grace of god kyn
 ge of Englonde and of Fraunce ʒ lord of Jrelonde / byse-
 ching his noble grace to receyue it in thanke of me his
 moste humble subget ʒ seruauzt / And I shall praye vnto
 almyghty god for his prosperous encreasyng in vertue / wy
 sedom / and humanyte that he may be egal wyth the most re-
 nommed of alle his noble progenytours. ¶ And so to lyue
 in this present lyf / that after this transitorye lyfe he and we
 alle may come to euerlastynge lyf in heuen / Amen :

[Colophon]

Fig. L 7.
recto.*

* on the
verso is
Caxton's
device.

HERE fynyssheth the boke [o]f¹ Eneydos / compyled by Vyr
 gyle / whiche hathe be translated oute of latyne in to frenshe /
 And oute of frenshe reduced in to Englysshe by me Wylliam
 Caxton / the xxij. daye of Juyn. the yere of our lorde .M.iiij
 C lxxxx. The fythe yere of the Regne of kyng Henry
 the seuenth

¹ text: *yf*

XXXIII

The Fifteen Oes.

[1490]

[EPILOGUE]

¶ Thiese prayers tofore wreton ben en printed bi the commaundementes of the mos te hye ʒ vertuous pryncesse our liege la di Elizabeth by the grace of god Quene of Englonde ʒ of Fraunce. ʒ also of the right hye ʒ most noble pryncesse Margarete Moder vnto our souerayn lorde the kyng / ʒc

¶ By their most humble subget and seruaunt William Caxton

XXXIV

Earl Rivers' Prologue

In order that Caxton's English style may be compared with the best style of his day, the first few lines of Earl Rivers' own Prologue to the "Dictes" follow below :

(leaf 1, recto.)

Where it is so that every humayn Creature by the suffraunce of our lord god is boren ʒ ordeigned to be subgette and thral vnto the stormes of fortune And so in diuerse ʒ many sondry wyses man is perplexid with worldly aduersitees Of the whiche I, Antoine Wydeuille, Erle Ryuyeres / lord Scales ʒc. haue largely ʒ in many different maners haue had my parte And of hem releued by thynfynye grace ʒ goodnes of our said lord thurgh the meane of the Mediatrice of Mercy, whiche grace euidently to me knowen ʒ understonde hath compelled me to sette a parte all in gratitude / And droof me by reson ʒ conscience as far as my wrecchednes wold suffyse to gyue therefore synguler lounges ʒ thanks / And exorted me to dispose my recouerd lyf to his seruyce in folowing his lawes and commandements / And in satisfaction ʒ recompence of myne Inyquytees ʒ fawtes

before done, to seke ⁊ execute y^e werkes that myght be most acceptable to hym / And as fer as myn fraynes wold suffre me I rested in that wyll ⁊ purpose Duryng that season I vnderstode the Jubylee ⁊ pardon^{ne} to be at the holy Appostle Seynt James in Spayne whiche was the yere of grace a thousand CCCC^{lxxiii}. Therne I determyned me to take that voyage ⁊ shipped from Southampton in the moneth of Iuyll the said yere And so sayled from thens til I come into the Spaynyssh see there lackyng syght of all londes / the wynde beyng good and the weder fayr / Thenne for a recreation ⁊ a passyng of tyme I had delyte ⁊ axed to rede somme good historye And among othier ther was that season in my companye a worshipful gentylman called lowys de Bretaylles, whiche gretly delited hym in all vertuouse ⁊ honest thynghes / that sayd to me / he hath there a book that he trusted I shuld lyke it right wele / and brought it to me / whyche book I had neuer seen before. and is called the saynges or dictis of the Philosophers.

INDEX

AFRICA, 75

Alexander, 20, 21, 92
 Antwerp, lii, lxxi, lxxiii, lxxviii, 74,
 75
 Aristotle, 20, 21
 Arundel, Wm., Earl of, 70, 76
 Augustine, Saint, 71, 75
Aureus de universo, 68
 Aurner, Miss N. S., cxi

Banste, Sir John de, 56, 57
 Bercholf, B., xciv
 Berkley, Thos., Lord, 68
 Bernard, Saint, 71
 Berry, John of, 52, 53
 Blades, Wm., xxvii, lii, lxxxvi, lxxxvii,
 cxi
 Boccaccio, 34, 93
 Boethius, 36
 Bologne, Godfrey of, 92, 96
 Bolonnier, Henry, 98
 Brabant, 4, 74
 Brekerfeld, J., xciv
 Brown, Steven, xxxvi
 Bruges, xli, xliii, xlix, l, lvii, lxii, lxvi,
 lxxi, lxxiii, lxxviii, lxxx, lxxxiii,
 lxxxv, xci-xciv, xcvi, 2, 6, 54, 55
 Bruns, Gerard, xciv
 Brussels, 74
 Bryce, Hugh, Alderman of London,
 xlv, cxiii, 52, 53, 56, 57
 Burgh, Benet, Archdeacon, cxviii, 76
 — Richard, xlv, xlv
 Butt, A. N., lxxxii

Calais, lxxi, xci
 Camelot, 94
 Canon of Waterford, 56, 57
 Canterbury, xxix, xc
 Capons, Sir John, 74
 Carton, l'abbé, xli
 Cassiodorus, John, 71
 Caston, Wm., xli
 Causton, Christiana de, xxxi
 — William de, xxxi, xxxii, cvii
 — William, xxxii; 'taillour,'
 lxxxviii
 Caxton, Hugh, xxxiv, xxxv
 — Richard, xxxii, xlv, cv-cvii
 — Robert, xxx
 — Thomas, xxxiii, xxxiv, xc, cv,
 cvii

CAXTON.

Caxton, William, *see Contents*.
 — Mawde, lxxxii, cxvii
 Caxtone, William de, xli
 Charlemagne, 92, 97, 106
 Charles the Bold, lxi, lxiii, lxiv, lxxi,
 lxxiii, lxxvi, lxxx, lxxxii, xcii, xciv,
 cii
 Charolais, Count of, *see Charles the
 Bold*.
 Charretier, Alan, 89
 Chassoigne (a tree), 27, 28, 29
 Chastellain, G., lxxvi
 Chaucer, cviii, cx, cxiv, cxv, cxvii,
 cxviii, cxix, 37, 69, 90, 91
 Cinque Ports, lxxxix
 Clarence, George, Duke of, lxxv, xcix,
 10
 Clyfton, Gervase, xlv
 Cologne, lxvi, lxvii, lxviii, lxxi, lxxiv,
 lxxx, lxxxiv-lxxxviii, xciii, xciv,
 cxvi, 2, 6, 7
 Colville, Major, cxv
 Common Pleas, c, 14, 15
 Copland, R., cxvii
 Cosyn, R., xlv
 Craes, Wm., xliii, xlv
 Crop, Elizabeth, daughter of the
 printer, lxxxii, Additional Note 1
 Dantzic, lxvii-lxix, lxxxv
 Darius, 20, 21
 Dartmouth, lxxvi
 Daubeney, Wm., cxxi, 99
 David, 74, 92
 Delf, xciv, xcvi
 Deneve, Abbeas of, xxxv
 Denmark, King of, lxvii, lxxi
 Dictes and Dares, 8, 33
 Dollyng, Wm., xciv
 Duerkoop, J., xciii, xciv
 Edelfa (a tree), 26, 27
 Edward I, 83
 Edward III, xxix, 83
 Edward IV, xliiii, xlviiii, lvii, lx, lxii,
 lxiii, lxv, lxxi, lxxv, lxxvi, lxxix,
 lxxxii, lxxxiv, lxxxv, lxxxix, xc-
 xciii, xciv, ci, cii, cix, cxi, cxiv, 10, 33,
 44, 48, 52, 53, 58, 59, 67, 68, 69, 93
 Elizabeth, Queen, 111
 Esteney, *see Westminster*.
 Exchequer, 14, 15

- fasciculus temporum*, 68
 Fastolf, Sir John, 41
 Fauconberg, Bastard of, lxxxix, xc
 Fèvre, Raoul le, lxxix, xviii, xcix,
 2, 5
 Fielding, Geoffrey, xlv
 Flanders, 4
 Florence, 78
flores Augustini, printer of, lxxxvii
 Flushing, xcv
 Frederick III of Poland, lxvi
 Froissart, 83
- George, Saint, 74
 Ghent, lxxx, 74
 Glatvil, Bartholomew de, lxxxvii,
 lxxxviii
 Glastonbury, 93
 Gloucester, Duchess of, xxxvii
 Godeyere, Wm., li
 Goldwell, Dean of Salisbury, lxix
 Gouda, xcv, xcvi
 Governor, duties of, liii; Caxton re-
 linquishes, lxxxvii
 Gower, cxviii
 Granton, J., xliii
 Green, J. R., xxix
 Gruthuyse, Louis de la, xliii, lxiii,
 lxiv, lxxxii-lxxxiv, xci, xcvi
Guldhalla Teutonicorum, lxv, lxxiv,
 lxxxv
- Hadlow, xxix, xxxi
 Hakluyt, xlvi, l, liii
 Hamburg, lxvii-lxx
 Hansa, Hansards, Hanseatic League,
 lxv-lxxiv, lxxxii, lxxxiii, lxxxv,
 lxxxvi, xci-xcv
 Harrowe, J., xlv
 Hasted, J., xxix
 Hastings, Wm. Lord, lix, lxxvi
 lxxviii, civ, cxiii, 52, 53, 56, 57
 Hatcliff, Wm., lxxviii, xci, xcii, xciv,
 Hector, 92
 Hell, the, c, 14, 15
 Hende, Wm., lix
 Henry IV, xlvi
 Henry V, 75
 Henry VI, xlvi, lxi, lxv, lxvii, lxxxviii,
 lxxxix, xc
 Henry VII, cxii, cxiii, 103, 104, 110
 Hercules, 66
 Heddyn, Castle of, 33
 Homer, 8
 House of Commons, lxvi, lxxxii note
- Indulgence, earliest, civ
 Ireland, 40
- Jerome, Saint, 71
 Jerusalem, St. John of, 11
 — conquest of, 71
 Joshua, 92
- Kent, lxxxv, lxxxix, 4
 King's bench, c, 14, 15
- Large, John, xxvii
 — Robert, xxvii, xxx, xxxvii,
 xxxviii, xl, xlv
 Legh, Alexander, xciii, xciv
 Lettou, J., cxii
 "Libelle of English Policie," xlii
 Lidgate, John, xcvi, cxviii, cxix, 6
 Lokyngton, W., cv, cvi
 London, city of, 77
 Lothbury, xl
 Louis of France, lxii, lxxv
 Lübeck, lxvii, lxx, xcii
 Lydd, xxxiii
- Madden, M., lxxxvii
 Malines, cii
 Malory, Sir T., cxx, 94
 Mansion, Colard, lxxxiii, lxxxvi,
 xcvi-xcviii, c, cii, Additional Note 2
 Marche, Olivier de la, lxiv
 Margaret, Duchess of Somerset, 104,
 111
 — of York, Duchess of Burgundy,
 lxi, lxiii, lxv, lxxvii, lxxx,
 lxxxiv, lxxxvi, xcvi, cii, cxii,
 2, 4, 6, 32
 — Queen of Henry VI, lx, lxvii, lxxv
 Martens, Thierry, xcvi
 Medea, 33, 35, 36
 Mentz, lxxxiv
 Merchants, 60
 Middleburg, l, lv, lxxvii, lxxviii, xcv
 Milreth, Wm., xxxviii
 Montgomery, Thos., lxi, xciv
 Morton, John, xciv
- Neve, John, ci, cii
 Neville, Anne, lxxv
 Nimwegen, xcii
 Nycolls, T., li
- Obray, Wm., xlvi-liv, lxxii
 Ovid, 71
 Oxford, 88
 — John, Earl of, 106
 — Robert, Earl of, 107
- Pardon, General, xxxiv, lxxxv,
 lxxxviii, xc
 Patrick's Purgatory, Saint, 56, 57
 Paul, Saint, 10, 95

- Pepyn, Roland Oliver, 96
 Philippe le Bel, 101, 102
 — le Bon, Duke of Burgundy,
 xxviii, xliii, l, liii, lv, lvii, lx, lxiv,
 xviii, cix, 2, 3, 33, 74
 Pickeryng, Wm., xxxviii
 Pisan, Christine de, cix, 32, 39, 103
 Plomer, Mr. H. R., xlv, lxxxi, xcix,
 cxx
 Poland, King of, lxviii, lxix
 Pope, the, 18, 19
 Pratt, Wm., xlv, cx, cxxii, 99
 Prince of Wales, 18, 19, 34, 36, 110
 Prout, J., Mayor of Calais, lxxii
 Pykeryng, John, lxxii, lxxviii, lxxix,
 lxxxix, xci

 Ranulph of Chester, 67, 68
 Receipt, Treasury of, c, 14, 15
 Rede, J., xlv
 Redeknap, E., xlv
 — W., lix, lxxii
 Richard I, 83
 Richard II, xxxi, xciv
 Richard III, cxvii, cxxi, 79, 84, 87, 80,
 99, 102
 Rivers, Anthony, Earl, xxxiv, lxv,
 lxxv, cviii, cix, cxi, 18, 19, 31, 32,
 38, 111
 Rome, 14, 15
 Rosse, J., xci
 Rotterdam, xc
 Russell, J., lxv, lxxviii, lxxx, xci

 St. Omers, lix, lxii, lxxi
 Salford, J., cii
 Scipios, the, 77
 Scofield, Miss C. L., ciii
 Scot, J., xciv
 Scott, E. J. L., xxi
 Seland, 4
 Selle, J., xliii
 Selley, Cecile, cvi
 — David, cvi, cxvii
 Shamwell, xxxv
 Sharp, Henry, lxviii
 Sigismund, Emperor, 74, 75
 Skelton, John, 109
 Socrates, 20–25, 28, 29
 Solomon, 11
 Spayne, R., cvi

 Stanney, J., 70
 Steelyard, the, lxv, lxx, lxxxv, xciii,
 xciv
 Stockton, J., lvi
 Sutton, J., lix

 Taster, Peter, lix
 Tenterden, xxxiii, xxxiv
 Tindale, 56, 57
 Trevisa, 67, 68
 Tunstall, Sir R., lxxvi

 Utrecht, lviii, lxi, lxii, lxiv, lxv, lxix,
 xci, xciii

 Van der Mye, Gh., xc, xcvi
 Vaughan, T., li
 Veldener, J., xcvi, xcvi
 Vignay, J. de, li, xcix, cxviii
 Virgil, 107

 Wanmate, xciv
 Warwick, Earl of, lxii, lxiii, lxxiv–
 lxxvi, lxxxiii, lxxxix
 Weald, the, xxviii
 Wenlock, J., li, lix, lxxii
 Werdenbach, lxxxvii
 Westminster, xxxi, lxxxii, xc, c, ciii,
 civ, cxii, cxvi, cxviii, cxxiv, 12,
 18, 19, 37, 38, 40, 48, 54, 55,
 62, 76, 79, 82, 87, 89, 93
 — Abbot of (John Eskteney), ciii,
 cxiii, 108
 — Palace of, 103
 Westphalia, John of, xcvi
 Wheeler, J., xxx
 Whetehill, Sir R., lvii, lix
 Willems zone, Pieter, lv
 Winchester, 93
 Woodville, Eliz., lxxiv
 — Sir J., lxxv
 Worcester, Earl of, John Tiptoft,
 lxxvi, lxxvii, cxv, 43–46
 Worde, Wynkyn de, lxxxvii, ciii,
 cxiii, cxxiv, cxv
 Wyche, Hugh, lvi
 — Richard, xxxvi
 Wydevile, A., lii

 Ypres, lxxiii

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